

# California Historical Quarterly

September 1971

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This special issue of the *California Historical Quarterly* has been published with the assistance of a grant from Security National Bank, Oakland, California.

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COVER: from *The San Francisco Illustrated Wasp*, December 8, 1877. *The Wasp*, perhaps the first substantial periodical in the nation regularly to publish lithographed drawings in color, was launched in 1876 by the Korbel interests, at that time a lithographic firm printing box labels, and not long after the notable wine and brandy makers who carry the name to this day. This was the first "socko" anti-Chinese cartoon in *The Wasp*, a journal which at this time as often deplored the drift of anti-Chinese sentiment. Whatever one may feel about "The First Blow at the Chinese Question," it is indeed to be deplored that there is not a single magazine in the West today which can offer up topical covers as good as the old *Wasp* drawings which have appeared on the June and September *CHQ*. Inside we offer a stinging selection of *Wasp* cartoons—and in the future we will no doubt present other selections from the journal that for a time served as platform for the arcane wit of Ambrose Bierce. (Cartoon courtesy of the Bancroft Library.)



# California Historical Quarterly

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The *California Historical Quarterly* is published by the California Historical Society in March, June, September and December. Membership is \$15.00 per year and includes subscription to the *Quarterly* and *NOTES*. Second-class postage paid at Pasadena, California. Contents copyrighted, 1971, by the California Historical Society. Office of publication: 1120 Old Mill Road, San Marino, California 91108. Editorial offices at 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco, California 94109.



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*Founded June 6, 1871  
Reorganized March 27, 1922*

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## Ethnic Experiences in California History: An Impressionistic Survey

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*The doctrine of "separate but equal" established by the United States Supreme Court in 1896 has never been a very accurate description of race relations in America. Although there has been a good deal of social separation, whites and non-whites always have been integral parts of the same economic, political and cultural system. But non-whites never have had an equal or proportionate share of the wealth, power and influence in that system. This has been as true for California as for the nation as a whole; thus, the title of this study: Neither Separate nor Equal.*

CALIFORNIA HISTORY provides an excellent case-study of America's multi-ethnic heritage, for no state, with the possible exception of Hawaii, has a more varied tradition of ethnic experience than California. Inter-ethnic relations and conflict have existed here for more than two centuries and have involved Indians, Europeans, Asians, Mexicans and blacks. But before examining California's tradition of ethnic experience, it is necessary to put the subject into the larger context of American history.

It is true that a strong historical movement toward cultural uniformity does exist in the United States, stimulated by the obvious necessities of a single political and economic system, by social and psychological pressures toward conformity, and by technological developments, particularly in transportation and communication. However, there also exists a tough, countervailing tendency toward maintenance of ethnic separation: the attempt of many ethnic, religious, and national minorities to maintain separate identities without sacrificing equal access to justice, status, and material well-being. The tension between these two conflicting social movements is one of the great motivating forces in our history, and often it is

manifested by sharp prejudices and hostilities between various groups. Usually, we call these social divisions conflicts between the "majority" and the "minority," but in reality we are all members of some ethnic, religious, or national minority. Even white, Anglo-Saxon Protestants, certainly the most influential group in our society, are a numerical minority. It should be obvious, then, that ethnic experience is a major theme in American history.

Yet for much of the twentieth century, American historians gave little attention to ethnic matters. The end of Reconstruction and the establishment of strict immigration laws seemed to settle ethnic issues once and for all. The Depression heightened interest in class rather than ethnic conflict, and World War II and the Cold War focused attention on real or alleged threats from abroad that seemed to unite all Americans. But the Civil Rights Movement of the late 1950's and early 1960's changed the national perspective. Attention was directed back to domestic affairs and particularly to race relations. The aggressive assertions of black people, even to the point of urban rebellion and avowedly revolutionary activity, had a dramatic effect on other groups in American society. Students and intellectuals adopted the tactics and rhetoric of the Civil Rights Crusade for their own protests and movements. "Non-white" minorities gained a greater sense of group identification and political militancy. Even some European ethnics, seeing the rise of non-white groups as a threat to their status and economic security, reacted with a new sense of ethnic pride and solidarity of their own. Revolutionary movements in Africa and Latin America further heightened group consciousness among black and Spanish-speaking people in the United States, while crises in the Middle East had a similar effect on Jewish-Americans. As ethnic matters became of increasing concern to most Americans, American historians again turned to an examination of ethnic experience in the past.

Such an examination was particularly needed in the Far West, and most particularly in California. Traditionally, the history of the region is treated as an "Anglo" drama, centering on the experience of native born, white Protestants. Moses Rischin has observed that only in the Far West is the word "immigration" often used to refer to the movement of Americans from east to west rather than the movement of foreigners to America.

But lack of coverage does not mean that ethnic or immigrant minorities have not had a rich heritage of experience in California. As early as 1850, about one-quarter of the state's population was foreign born (born outside of California or the United States). By 1860 the figure was nearly 40%, and as late as 1910, 68% of San Francisco's population was foreign-born or children of at least one foreign-born parent. Throughout California's history a substantial portion of this foreign born population has been "non-white," and added to this have been significant numbers of native-born minority group members. The 1970 census will show that about four

million Californians are "non-white," including more than two million of Mexican descent, at least one million blacks and about five hundred thousand Asians.

The California Indians probably have had the most unique and devastating experience of all ethnic groups in the state. Indians were the original inhabitants and thus had to be formally conquered and colonized. They were expected to adopt the culture of their conquerors, yet their own hunting-and-gathering way of life and the social and spiritual values it engendered made the adjustment to western ways extraordinarily difficult. But in spite of its unique features, the Indian experience is the forerunner of important themes that also characterize experiences of other non-white groups. Indians served as California's first non-white agricultural labor force. Like other groups, they were victims of formalized discrimination. Under American rule, they, like Asians and blacks, were denied the right to vote, hold office, and testify against whites in court.

Technically, Indians were a majority under Spanish-Mexican rule, but the Spanish minority appropriated for itself the entire social and political power in California. Spanish society throughout the New World consisted of a small "master-class" supported by large numbers of non-European workers, and California was no exception. The Franciscan missions not only converted Indians to Christianity, but also trained Indians to serve as agricultural workers. This involved a complete transformation of Indian way of life, a process which had tragic consequences. European diseases and social dislocation took a tremendous toll in Indian lives, and whole cultures were destroyed or drastically altered.

In 1833 the Mexican government "secularized" the missions; the Friars were stripped of their temporal control over the land, while Indians were declared free and equal citizens of the new Mexican nation. In reality, secularization simply allowed private land owners, the California *rancheros*, to obtain title to the old mission properties. Some of the mission Indians went along with the land to become workers on the new *ranchos*. Others returned to their pre-European ways of life, and still others simply died without heirs, as the general Indian population decline continued. But there was some flexibility in Indian-European relations during these years. Sexual and cultural mixture did take place, and some Indian *vaqueros* on the ranchos spoke Spanish, wore European clothes, married *mestizas* and thus passed from the Indian to the Mexican world. Even some "wild Indians," living outside the immediate area of Spanish-Mexican control, began planting crops and riding horses.

Any hope of large-scale sexual or cultural fusion was doomed by the American conquest and the Gold Rush. Unlike the Spanish and Mexicans, or even the Yankees who had obtained Mexican land grants before 1846,

most Anglo-Americans who came after the discovery of gold did not need Indians as a source of labor. Individualistic miners, merchants, and farmers had no desire to compete against entrepreneurs who controlled large numbers of non-white workers, and when such entrepreneurs did arrive on the scene, they preferred Asian to Indian labor. The American settlers also brought fears and prejudices bred from long conflict with Indians on the frontier. Miners poured into areas formerly left unsettled by whites and thus disrupted previously undistributed Indian cultures. Attempts by the federal government to separate whites and Indians or to establish viable reservations were feeble at best. The result was that Hubert Howe Bancroft called "one of the last human hunts of civilization, and the basest and most brutal of them all." By 1880 California's Indian population had been reduced by disease, demoralization, and warfare to about 20,000—less than 10% of the total that existed in 1769 when the Europeans arrived.

In comparison with the Indians, Asian immigrants who came to California in the nineteenth century had an easy time adjusting to the California way of life. Without minimizing the great differences between Asian and Western culture or the great difficulties Asians had in California, it is important that China and Japan, unlike Indian California, had experienced thousands of years of urban and agricultural development. In many respects, the Asian experience in California was like that of immigrants from European societies. But the Chinese and Japanese were non-white, and thus they faced far greater levels of discrimination and prejudice than any European group.

Chinese were the first Asian arrivals, coming as an integral part of the Gold Rush migration of the 1850's. Initially, they were regarded as exotic curiosities, but as they competed against white miners in the gold fields, they became subject to increasing hostility. Thus began the close historical relationship linking economic competition between whites and Asians to anti-Orientalism in California. Chinese in the gold fields suffered mob violence, found it impossible to file valid mining claims, and were forced to pay discriminatory foreign miners' taxes. As a result, they were relegated to jobs white workers would not take, because of low status or low pay. Chinese labor gangs worked over diggings already abandoned by whites. Chinese often were forced to do "women's work": laundry, cooking, and domestic service. They also served as an unskilled labor source for large employers, such as the big railroad and farming interests which did not wish to pay the high wages demanded by whites. By 1870 Chinese accounted for at least ten percent of California's total population, and their numbers were increasing.

The most violent anti-Chinese feeling occurred during the depression years of the 1870's. Growing numbers of white workers now were forced to compete with Chinese immigrants for even the lowest paying jobs, and



thus the Asians became convenient scapegoats for conditions of unemployment and low wages. A major race riot in Los Angeles resulted in nineteen Chinese deaths, and similar, though less deadly, incidents occurred in other parts of the state. The Chinese issue often divided white society along class lines, with groups such as Denis Kearney's Workingman's Party proclaiming "the Chinese must go!" and large employers such as the railroad defending the Chinese presence. The issue also became an inter-ethnic rivalry between the state's two largest immigrant groups, the Chinese and the Irish. While some people of Irish descent had become wealthy and powerful figures in California, most Irish immigrants were manual laborers, threatened both by depression and Chinese competition. Irish workers gave strong support to the actions of Kearney, himself an Irish immigrant. Finally, in 1882 Congress prohibited further Chinese immigration to the United States, the first instance of significant immigration restriction in American history. However, formal discrimination, mob violence, and labor hostility continued to plague the Chinese for the rest of the nineteenth century.

Japanese immigration to California began on a large scale in the two decades following Chinese exclusion. Japanese were filling the demand for cheap labor created by the ending of Chinese immigration. It was natural that Japanese would inherit much of the anti-orientalism previously aimed at Chinese, since in addition to physical similarities, the two groups offended many of the same economic interests. However, there were important differences in the nature of the Chinese and Japanese immigrations. A greater portion of Japanese apparently came for the purpose of settling in California and making it their home. Thus, they were more apt eventually to bring a wife, raise a family, and invest in a farm or business. The Japanese came from a country which, unlike China at that time, was becoming an industrialized world power. This probably helped Japanese adjust to the dynamic social environment of California which was not totally unlike that of Japan. Moreover, Japan's status as a nation to be reckoned with in world affairs gave the Japanese government considerable power in protecting the interests of Japanese citizens living abroad.

But many of these apparent advantages only served to increase hostility against the Japanese. The very success Japanese had in adjusting to the California way of life, their ability to invest in farms and small businesses, the achievement of their children in school simply created greater resentment against them. The power and assertiveness of the Japanese government only helped fan the flames of "Yellow Peril," the fear that Japan was engaged in a plot to conquer the entire Pacific Basin. It is not surprising that peaks of anti-Japanese resentment in California coincide with Japanese assertiveness in Asia. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907, limiting immigration of unskilled Japanese, and the Alien Land Law of 1913, preventing Jap-

anese from owning additional California farm property, came at times of strained diplomatic relations between Japan and the United States. The second, more restrictive, land law of 1921 again coincided with international tension between the two countries.

Of course, the most dramatic example of California anti-orientalism was the forced removal of all people of Japanese origin from the Pacific Coast in 1942. The relocation clearly cannot be explained without reference to the war and the nature of the attack on Pearl Harbor, but it also cannot be understood without considering the deep fears and stereotypes about Japanese that existed in the American and, particularly, the California mind. Pearl Harbor triggered long-standing prejudices and rivalries; suddenly the Japanese attack made "Yellow Peril" a reality, despite the fact that there was no evidence of mass disloyalty among the Pacific Coast Japanese (sixty percent of whom were citizens of the United States). One of the relocation's ironies was that it came at a time when the Japanese experience in California clearly had become one of the great success stories of American immigration history. Despite discriminatory land legislation, Japanese farmers produced more than a third of the state's total truck crops, and Japanese merchants controlled a large share of the wholesale and retail produce trade in the Los Angeles urban area.

The virtual disappearance of overt anti-orientalism from the surface of California life since World War II is a matter which warrants more study than it has received. The war experience itself probably helped lessen anti-orientalism. There was no reason to fear a defeated Japan or resent the power of a minority which had been forcefully removed, and China had become an ally. But, it is clear that today many of the old fears and stereotypes still exist beneath the surface. China and again Japan are rising to world power status; Japanese exports are causing considerable resentment in some parts of American society; and large-scale Chinese immigration to California has been renewed.

The twentieth-century migration of Mexicans to the state, like the earlier arrivals of Asians, came as a result of California's incessant demand for cheap labor. By the 1920's, Chinese and Japanese had left the lowest paying jobs in agriculture and construction. This exodus coincided with labor shortages caused by World War I and severe restrictions on European immigration. (Immigration from Asia was completely banned, except for the U.S. territory of the Philippines.) At the same time, social revolution was causing chaos and dislocation in Mexico, conditions which stimulated increasing migration across the border. By the mid-twenties, Mexico had become the largest source of foreign immigration for California. Though the depression of the 1930's slowed the tide of immigrants and even resulted in forced "repatriations" of Mexicans back to their homeland, the wartime boom of the 'forties again stimulated both legal and illegal movement across

the border, including the government-sponsored Bracero Program. The war also served to transform California's Mexican population into a largely urban people; by 1943 violent tensions between urban Mexicans and whites in Los Angeles led to the so-called "Pachuco Riots."

Unlike Asians, Mexican immigrants to California were moving into land formerly dominated by Spanish-speaking people. By the end of the nineteenth century, the old *Californios* of Spanish-Mexican days virtually ceased to exist as an identifiable ethnic group. They had been overwhelmed by the tide of Anglo migration. In spite of the protection of their civil and property rights promised by the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Spanish-speaking miners suffered severe discrimination in the gold fields, and very few *Californio* families managed to maintain control of rancho land. Some of the old families merged into the Anglo middle and upper classes; others were integrated into the tide of poor Mexican immigrants, but in either case, a distinct old *Californio* group had disappeared by 1900. Nevertheless, the Spanish-speaking heritage of California and the Southwest has given twentieth-century Mexican-Americans an emotional and ideological identification with the region that other immigrant groups have not had.

Mexicans also have been unique as an immigrant group in that they have had little difficulty maintaining contact with the "old country." Mexican immigrants did not have to cross an ocean to get to California, only a land border which never has been much of a barrier to legal or illegal passage. And border crossing of Mexicans always has been a two-way proposition: migrant workers constantly return home, temporary residents go back to Mexico when economic conditions in California worsen, permanent immigrants visit relatives, and children are sent for a vacation stay with grandparents. These contacts have given great strength to the Spanish language and the Mexican way of life in California, and this in turn has created difficulties for young Mexican-Americans caught between the Mexican world of their parents and the Anglo world of school and job.

As an ethnic minority, Mexicans also have been unique in that they officially have been classified as "white" by the Census Bureau. To some degree, this has reflected the fact that Mexicans with European features have been able to call themselves "Spanish" and pass into the Anglo world. But it has not prevented most Mexicans from being treated as "non-white" by the general population; they have experienced the same kind of discrimination in California as black people and Asians. They also have a long tradition of rebellion against such economic and social conditions. The Delano strike was only the latest chapter in the long story of farm labor struggle among California Mexicans which goes back more than forty years. And since the "Pachuco" movement of the 1940's, passivity hardly has been a characteristic of the urban *barrios*.

Like the rapid growth of these *barrios* in recent years, the great migra-

tion of black people to California is largely the result of the economic boom of World War II and the Post-War era. Between 1940 and 1970 the state's black population grew eight-fold. But people of African descent have been in California for more than two centuries. Mulattoes were among the first Spanish arrivals in the 1770's, and larger numbers of blacks came during the Gold Rush. In the 1850's, Afro-Americans already were organizing conventions to petition for the right to vote, hold office and testify in court against whites, rights denied blacks in the "free" state of California before the Civil War. Blacks also protested against California's Fugitive Slave Law. After the Civil War, and again after World War I, there were sizable increases in the state's black population, and by 1940 the outlines of the Watts and West Oakland ghettos already were visible. The labor shortages caused by World War II resulted in concerted efforts by defense contractors to attract black workers to the state. Once the migration began, it grew rapidly, so that by the 1960's California was second only to New York as a recipient of black people leaving the South.

In many respects, the black migration to California can be compared to the immigration of Asians and Mexicans. Often blacks have come from rural, under-developed parts of the South which are not totally unlike the peasant societies of Asia and Mexico. The social shock of adjusting to the urban, technological society of California has for black Southerners been something akin to the experience of immigrant groups adjusting to America itself. Blacks, like Asians and Mexicans in California, have faced the familiar pattern of discrimination in housing, jobs, unions, and schools. The fact that it is *de facto* rather than *de jure* discrimination has made little difference to the victim.

But the black experience in California also has its unique features. Black people came to California with centuries of experience living in white America. Blacks spoke English, belonged to Protestant churches, and had familiarity with the political system. Unlike Asian immigrants who were prohibited by court decisions from becoming citizens, twentieth-century blacks had citizenship in theory, if not always in fact. Perhaps this partially explains why blacks are better represented within the political system than other non-white groups in California.

However, along with these comparative advantages came severe handicaps. Black people have not had the commercial heritage of Asian immigrants. The de-humanizing experience of slavery was a more drastic social and psychological shock than the "up-rootedness" experienced by immigrants. Slavery's devastating effect on family life and African culture robbed black people of traditional emotional ties and institutions which gave foreign immigrant groups strength. This is not to say that an Afro-American life-style, family structure, and group identification did not develop in America, only that this development took place under different



and more difficult conditions than was the case for immigrant groups.

Since World War II, black-white hostility has been the most publicized case of ethnic conflict in California, a fact dramatized by the 1964 election issue of Proposition 14. The Watts Riot of 1965, of course, was the greatest crisis in black-white relations. As a violent racial conflict, Watts was not unique in California's history or even in the history of Los Angeles. The Los Angeles "Chinese Riot" of 1871 or "Pachuco Riot" of 1943 can be compared to Watts in many respects. However, in these earlier cases, whites took the violent initiative and non-white people were their chief targets. In Watts, on the other hand, non-white people took the violent initiative and white property was the chief target. Perhaps this difference is symptomatic of deep changes now occurring in relationships between whites and non-whites which eventually will alter the whole pattern of ethnic experience in California.

But no matter what comes in the future, the past experience of ethnic groups in the state is in desperate need of study. Even this brief survey shows the extent to which minorities have been subject to discrimination, prejudice, and exploitation throughout California history. However, as pervasive as racism has been, it is not the only determining factor in the experience of the state's ethnic groups. The groups' own cultural and social backgrounds, the political and economic situation in California, and foreign policy questions have played a major role in the experience of different groups at different times. We thus need comparisons of the histories of particular minorities and thorough examinations of the conflicts and coalitions which have existed between such groups. The historical ties between racism, class conflict, and nationalism in California deserve more attention than they have received. Certainly if historians do not deal with the complexities of such subjects, there is little hope of greater understanding by the general public. If it is true that those who ignore history are bound to repeat it, the prospects for improved ethnic relations in California are not encouraging, for Californians have largely ignored the heritage of ethnic experience in their past.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

THIS SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY concentrates on twentieth-century works, but I would be remiss in not noting that many of California's nineteenth-century historians and social commentators dealt with the role of non-whites in California life. Interpretations of these authors covered a wide gamut, ranging from Josiah Royce's severe condemnation of the Forty-niners' violent treatment of non-whites in *California From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee, a Study in American Character* (Boston, 1886), to Charles Howard Shinn's celebration of California miners' "Teutonic" democracy in *Mining Camps, a Study in American Frontier Government* (New York, 1885).

In the twentieth century, Carey McWilliams has paid more attention to California's multi-racial heritage than any other author. His books document the contribu-

tions of non-whites to California life and contain strong moral judgments against racial prejudices and economic exploitation; in particular, see *Factories in the Fields* (Boston, 1939), and *California, the Great Exception* (New York, 1949). Recently, three general studies of California's ethnic experience have been published. Charles Wollenberg, ed., *Ethnic Conflict in California History* (Los Angeles, 1970), contains eight original essays which comprise a good but by no means complete introduction to the subject. Robert Heizer and Alan Almquist, *The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination Under Spain Mexico and the United States to 1920* (Berkeley, 1971), is a scholarly work documenting the existence of racism during the Spanish-Mexican and early American periods, but the book is weak in its coverage of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Harry H. L. Kitano and Roger Daniels, *American Racism, an Exploration of the Nature of Prejudice* (Englewood Cliffs, 1970), includes a brief but useful survey of ethnic history in California as part of a general analysis of racism in America. Paul Jacobs and Saul Landau, eds., *To Serve the Devil* (New York, 1971), is a documentary history of American racism and contains valuable material on Asians and Mexicans in California.

The standard works on California Indians deal primarily with pre-European cultures, but Alfred Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California* (Berkeley, 1925), and Robert Heizer and Ann Whipple, *The California Indian: a Sourcebook* (Berkeley, 1951), also include information on the effects of white contact and domination. Sherburne Cook, *The Conflict Between the California Indian and White Civilization* (Berkeley, 1943), is a scholarly account of the near-genocide practiced against Indians, and Jack Forbes, *Native Americans of California and Nevada* (Healdsburg, 1969), includes a strong condemnation of the white "invasion" of California. For a defense of the Franciscan missionaries' Indian policies see Maynard J. Geiger, *The Life and Times of Fray Junípero Serra* (Washington, 1959), and for an analysis of Indian policy in the Mexican period see Cecil Alan Hutchinson, *Frontier Settlement in Mexican California* (New Haven, 1969). Theodora Kroeber, *Isbi, Last of His Tribe* (Berkeley, 1961), is a moving biography of the last Yana Indian.

There is need for a good general history of the Chinese in California, though Mary Coolidge's pioneer work, *Chinese Immigration* (New York, 1909), Rose Hum Lee, *Chinese in the U.S.A.* (Hong Kong, 1960), and a brief survey edited by Thomas Chinn, *A History of the Chinese in California* (San Francisco, 1969), all provide useful information. Gunther Barth, *Bitter Strength* (Cambridge, 1963), and Stanford Lyman, *The Asian and the West* (Reno, 1970), contain excellent, though somewhat conflicting, interpretations of the nineteenth-century "sojourner" stage of Chinese immigration. Lyman's work also deals thoughtfully with other themes in California's Asian heritage. Elmer Sandmeyer, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Urbana, 1939), has been supplemented by the broader perspective of Stuart Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant, American Image of the Chinese 1785-1822* (Berkeley, 1970). Alexander Saxton integrates anti-Orientalism into his analysis of social class and political structure in late nineteenth-century California in *The Indispensable Enemy, Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley, 1971).

The Japanese experience also lacks a good general history, although Harry H. L. Kitano provides a valuable social analysis in *Japanese Americans, Evolution of a Sub-Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, 1969). Much of the writing on the Japanese experience concentrates on the wartime relocation, and Alan K. Bosworth, *America's Concentration Camps* (New York, 1967), and Morton Grodzins, *Americans Betrayed* (Stanford, 1949), are among the best of the critical descriptions of that event. Jacobus tenBroek, Floyd Matson, and Edward Barnhard discuss the dangerous legal and

constitutional precedents established by the relocation in *Prejudice, War and the Constitution* (Berkeley, 1951). McWilliams, *Prejudice: Japanese Americans* (Boston, 1944), and Dorothy Swain Thomas, *The Salvage* (1952), cover the relocation, but in addition both books include valuable material on the pre-war Japanese, and Thomas' work contains a discussion of the problems of the post-war return to California. Roger Daniels, *Politics of Prejudice, Anti-Japanese Movement in California* (Berkeley, 1962), is a good study of the impact of the "Yellow Peril" fear on California politics. Bill Hosokawa provides a highly personal account of the experience of the second generation in *Nisei, the Quiet American: the Story of a People* (New York, 1969). John Modell's thoughtful articles which have appeared in the *Pacific Historical Review* and *Ethnic Conflict in California History* provide good insights into the structure of the Japanese community in California.

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S. Stewart, *Now is the Time, Integration in the Berkeley Schools* (Bloomington, 1969), discuss school segregation in California from a liberal, integrationist point of view. Their underlying optimism contrast with the gloomy account of race relations in Southern California contained in Richard Elman, *Ill at Ease in Compton* (New York, 1967), or Eldridge Cleaver's expression of black rage, *Soul on Ice* (New York, 1967).

### CHRONOLOGY

The following brief chronology presents some of the important dates in the history of California's ethnic minorities during the past 150 years.

- 1834 Secularization of the missions; subsequently private ranchos take over lands and Indian labor.
- 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guarantees civil and property rights of the *Californios*.
- 1850 State Constitution denies suffrage to blacks and Indians (Asians also denied suffrage as they are aliens ineligible for citizenship).
- 1850 Blacks and Indians denied right to testify against whites (applies to Asians in 1854).
- 1850 Governor Peter Burnett speaks of "war of extinction" against Indians.
- 1850 Legislature authorizes forced labor of "vagrant" Indians.
- 1850 First state foreign miners' tax (aimed particularly at Mexicans).
- 1852 Second foreign miners' tax (aimed particularly at Chinese).
- 1852 California Land Commission investigates validity of Spanish-Mexican land grants.
- 1852 California fugitive slave law provides for return of slaves to the South.
- 1852 Treaties with Mother Lode Indians rejected by U.S. Senate.
- 1858 Court in Archy Lee case prevents return of a black to slavery.
- 1863 Blacks allowed to testify against whites (extended to Asians and Indians in 1872).
- 1870 15th Amendment extends right to vote to non-white citizens.
- 1870 State law provides for separate schools for non-whites.
- 1871 Nineteen Chinese killed by Los Angeles rioters.
- 1874 Courts rule that non-whites may attend white schools if separate schools not available.
- 1877 Workingmen's Party leads anti-Chinese agitation.
- 1879 Chinese prohibited from employment by California corporations (later ruled unconstitutional).
- 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act passed by Congress (renewed in 1892, made "permanent" in 1902).
- 1906 Attempt of San Francisco to segregate Japanese in schools causes diplomatic crisis.
- 1907 "Gentlemen's Agreement" with Japan limits unskilled immigrants to U.S.
- 1913 Alien Land Act aimed at preventing Japanese aliens from owning land (extended to leasing of land in 1920).
- 1924 Indians receive citizenship.



- 1924 New immigration law excludes Asians (except from Philippines), leaves Mexican immigration open.
- 1933 Large-scale forced repatriation of Mexicans from California.
- 1934 Wave of strikes by Mexican and Filipino farm workers
- 1942 Coastal Japanese "relocated."
- 1942 Beginning of Bracero program.
- 1943 "Pachuco" riots against Los Angeles Mexicans.
- 1943 Chinese exclusion repealed.
- 1944 First compensation of California Indian land claims by U.S. government.
- 1946 School segregation in California ruled illegal.
- 1948 "Restrictive covenants" in real estate titles declared unconstitutional.
- 1952 Alien Land Law unconstitutional.
- 1952 Asian aliens eligible for citizenship.
- 1952 Japanese exclusion repealed.
- 1959 Fair Employment Practices Act.
- 1963 Rumford Fair Housing Act.
- 1964 "Proposition 13" negates Rumford Act (but is itself ruled unconstitutional in 1967).
- 1964 Bracero program ended.
- 1965 Immigration quota ended (Chinese immigration increases, but Mexican immigration limited).
- 1965 Delano farm workers' strike begins.
- 1965 Watts riots.
- 1966 Black Panther party founded in Oakland.
- 1968 "De facto" school segregation ends in Berkeley.
- 1971 Court orders complete integration of San Francisco schools.

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## The Native American Experience in California History

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*It is as accurate to say that Pocahontas "discovered" Britain as to claim that Cabrillo "discovered" California. The heritage of human experience in California goes back thousands of years before Cabrillo's voyage in 1542, yet the people who established that heritage, the California Indians, have become the state's most oppressed and (until recently) most forgotten ethnic group. Jack Forbes not only discusses the plight of California Indians since 1769, but also identifies the sources of social and psychological strength in traditional Indian culture which have helped the original native Californians to survive against great odds.*

THE NATIVE AMERICAN or Indian experience in California divides itself naturally into three major eras, one long and two relatively brief. The first era, that of exclusive Indian occupancy, endured for fifteen thousand years or more. The second, that of European invasion and military conquest, lasted about one hundred years (1769-1873). The third, that of colonialism and non-violent Indian resistance, has thus far endured for a century, from 1874 to 1971. Comparing the length of these eras reveals a great deal about California's native experience. The greater part of that experience was wholly pre-European, and the last two centuries represent but a brief, although profoundly influential, period in native history.

Quite obviously, the nature of the Indian experience was distinct in each of these eras. In the first the native people were alone, free to develop their society in their own way. The second era saw the Indian people overrun by the horror of imperialism and war, and reduced in numbers from perhaps 200,000-300,000 to a mere 20,000. The third period saw the California natives climb slowly upward in population to about 50,000 (including Cholos or part-Indians), but at the same time suffer from discrimination, poverty, and dominance by a colonial agency (the Bureau of Indian Affairs). During this period, however, the native experience in California was broadened by the in-migration and birth of at least 75,000 Indians from other parts of the United States and more than 2,000,000 Mexicans of native ancestry.

Ironically, then, the changes set off by the European invasion have had the net effect of increasing the numbers of persons of Indian "blood" in California by ten-fold, although almost eliminating, for a time, the native Californians. In any case, it is clear that a summary of the total native American experience in California must encompass, although briefly perhaps, the total Indian experience of North America.

The first 15,000 years of California's past can be known and understood only through the medium of the Indian experience and only through the "eyes" provided by a profound insight into native American civilization. Archaeology, although a very useful science, can provide no more than a grasp of the residue of material culture and skeletal characteristics left behind by ancient California. The "flesh," the "feel" of a living, functioning way of life, can only come by means of knowing Indian people and their socio-political-religious-philosophical systems.

Tragic indeed is the fact that the white invaders tried so hard to destroy the Indian and his civilization that by 1900-1920 (when scientific ethnology really appeared in California) it was exceedingly difficult to know exactly how the people thought and lived a century or a century and a half earlier. Many native societies were literally wiped off the face of the earth and others were represented by only a few deeply shocked, often hostile and distrustful individuals.

Nonetheless, in spite of the loss of detailed information for many areas, the broad nature of California civilization can be sketched with a knowledge of general Indian value systems serving to explain otherwise mysterious behavior.

Native Californian civilization was of such a nature that at least five hundred autonomous republics could exist within the present boundaries of California in relative harmony and without imperialism. More significantly, in these republics the fundamental dignity and self-rule of each individual person was virtually universal. Can we imagine today numerous republics without armies, living largely at peace with each other, each without police or other formal instrument of societal coercion? Can we imagine societies bound together into leagues covering large areas, the links consisting primarily or solely in religion (ceremony-sharing) and kinship, with no formal "international" machinery or "peace-keeping" armies? Can we understand political systems where chiefs and leaders are powerless in a formal sense, depending upon the agreement of the people for all major enterprises? Can we imagine systems of decision making where all of the people are involved and where everyone has a right to be heard even if it means that meetings drag on and on until consensus is achieved?

There can be little question that native Californians (and many other native Americans) were profoundly successful society builders, for almost all of the individual republics were utopias from the perspective of much of

classic political and social theory, and also from the viewpoint of modern Californians alienated by mass society, big government, crime, and so on.

One might well argue that democracy reached its highest stage of development not in Greece (where, after all, most of the people were slaves or excluded from decision making) but in native California. Of course, it is also true that Californian democracy was able to endure only because of certain religious and social conditions which might be regarded as disadvantages in some quarters. First, most California societies discouraged the accumulation of material wealth and required hospitality and sharing (that is, "required" in the sense that a miser would be a social outcast and could not achieve public office). Many leaders were indeed "wealthy men"; they were wealthy because one of the duties of a leader was to show hospitality and share with others. Thus the people saw to it that a leader possessed goods enough to give away.

The lack of accumulated, inherited wealth and the required sharing served to prevent the development of hereditary social classes. Social classes are, of course, not only destructive of democracy but also, historically, they probably gave rise to exploitation and large-scale imperialism.

Second, native Californians (and all Indians) felt themselves to be something other than independent, autonomous individuals. They perceived themselves as being deeply bound together with other people (and with the surrounding non-human forms of life) in a complex inter-connected web of life, that is to say, a true community. This communal outlook was at times quite profound, as when an individual conceived of his life as being much less important than the life of the whole.

These various social outlooks, necessary to a true democracy, were in fact grounded in the native view of the universe and indeed can only be fully comprehended as part of the religious experience of the people. I believe that, by and large, the Indian people conceived of the universe as being part of, and arising from, the Great Mystery or the Creator. All creatures and all things came from the same Father and were, therefore, brothers and sisters. From this idea came the basic principle of non-exploitation, of respect and reverence for all creatures, a principle extremely hostile to the kind of economic development typical of modern society and destructive of human morals. (It was this principle, I suspect, which more than anything else preserved California in its "natural" state for 15,000 years, and it is the steady violation of this principle which, in a century and a half, has brought California to the verge of destruction.)

The unfolding, creative process inherent in the Great Mystery takes the form of at least two levels of reality, a mystical level and an ordinary day-to-day world of sense perception. The mystical level is one typified by an absence of physical boundaries and an absence of linear space-time relationships. It is the realm, as it were, of ideal forms, a realm in which all creatures



can and do participate both consciously and unconsciously. It is the realm where, by means of dreams and visions, Indians can enter and secure direct contact with the sources of "power" (ability and knowledge) and with the endless, cyclical creative processes of the universe.

The day-to-day level of sense perception is generally conceived of as a less significant, but real and necessary, part of the unfolding of the Creator. It is the stage, as it were, for the acting out or giving expression to the "power" (or potentiality) of the universe. For example, an Indian doctor acts out in this world the knowledge acquired by means of a vision-experience in the mystical realm. To put it another way, the "unconscious" of the psychologist does not exist in a separate area of the brain, but rather is a part of a larger reality connecting all creatures and life itself.

This view of the universe affected Indian social life considerably, since it caused them to share a world view common to mystics and the deeply religious, they tended to emphasize eternal, enduring values, contacts with the Great Mystery, and the acting out of the beauty and harmony of the Universe in their own lives. At the same time, they deemphasized the acquisition of material goods and the other kinds of activities which arise from a purely mechanical-materialistic view of reality.

It would be a mistake, of course, to portray all native Californians as saints living in five hundred bi-sexual monastic communities. But in final analysis, it is easier to understand the near perfection of the secular level of Indian behavior if one is able to comprehend that Indian communities were indeed religious communities in which virtually every act had religious and moral relevance. Indians were, and are, earthy, hearty, and happy people (when among themselves) because their religion was not a negation of the natural world and its processes. On the contrary, such things as sex, the human body, and bodily functions were generally viewed as a vital part of the Creation. In particular, the female-male relationship was seen as a vital force in the total creative process of the Universe and one to be respected as essentially a religious or at least a highly moral phenomenon.

Thus Indian communities were at the same time religious and "earthy" because their religion did not create a dualism between the "spiritual" and the "material." The Indian view, like the Buddhist-Hindu-Asian view, blended the spiritual and material into one process of unfolding and return. The avoidance of dualism was, of course, a crucial philosophical step since any dualistic system runs the risk of either overemphasizing the negation of the material world (as in anti-sexual monastic orders) or the negation of the spiritual world (as in European capitalist society).

I have devoted so much space to emphasizing religious and social behavior because native Californian civilization must be viewed as a 15,000 year effort to perfect the inter-human and human-creation relationships. In other words, the native Californians were not machine creating people,

not monument creating people, not great city creating people, but rather they were applied philosophers, seeking not in theory but in practice to act out in their lives the beauty and harmony of the Great Mystery.

A grasp of this perspective is essential, since Europeans have ordinarily judged cultures solely on the basis of the size of their public monuments, the extent of their military conquests, the amount of surplus wealth accumulated, the elaboration of the material basis of life, and, of course, the numbers of slaves or poor people being successfully exploited. The greater the degree of exploitation, the greater the amount of "hard goods," the higher the ranking of the culture in question. But native Californian society must be measured by a different scale, even as Jesus of Nazareth and Julius Caesar must be rated on different bases.

In practice, western Europeans have given lip-service to Jesus but real reverence to Caesar. And as a result, California Indians were, and are, looked down upon because they failed to carve out empires by means of bloody wars and failed to devote their energies to building huge stone and steel monuments to materialism.

The Spaniards who invaded California in 1769 after abortive attempts at settlement from the 1530's through 1611) were quite different people from native Californians. After two thousand years of learning from Carthaginians, Romans, Vandals, Goths and Arabs the Spanish had become, at least at the upper levels, a highly militaristic, aggressive, and materialistic people. By the 1490's the Spaniards had come to accept an extremely perverse and anti-social view of life, from the Indian perspective. They looked with general approbation upon such things as interfering with the freedom of other persons, setting up elitist-authoritarian systems of governance, conquering other peoples and building empires, acquiring material wealth, erecting ornate buildings and monuments, exploiting conquered or enslaved populations, and using subterfuge as a justifiable means of achieving objectives. Naturally there were Spaniards who still preserved an indigenous "peasant" view of the universe or who embraced the mystical side of Christianity, but the dominant type who ventured to the Americas and to California were followers of Julius Caesar, whether wearing clerical robes or soldier's armour.

To the Spaniards, Indian democracy was so much anarchy; Indian anti-materialism was perverse laziness; Indian religion was paganism; Indian languages and customs were obstacles to their integration into the empire as tax-paying, hard working subjects.

The missions which were established in California between 1769 and 1823 were not "churches." On the contrary, they were centers for bringing about almost total cultural change by generally authoritarian means, and for the economic exploitation of Indians. Although many Franciscan priests in California may have been primarily concerned with religious salvation from the viewpoint of their dualistic religion, in actual practice the Hispan-

ic chauvinism and Caesar-worship of the Spanish Franciscan orders made them collaborators with secular officials. Thus, the Indians were not merely forced to observe the forms of Christian worship, they were also forced gradually to assume the entire economic support of the empire in California and even to send surpluses to Mexico. (To a certain extent this process was opposed by the Franciscans; however, the very nature of the type of mission created in California made it almost inevitable that the surplus produced by Indians would be used for imperial purposes. To put it bluntly, the Franciscans were wholly dependent upon the Spanish military for protection and never, at any time, considered that Indians—whether Christian or non-Christian—had any political rights taking precedence over the interests of the Spanish Empire.)

Undoubtedly there were a few Indians who reacted favorably to the Spanish colonial system, but by and large the majority recoiled with ever growing hostility. Those Indians residing in the area from Clear Lake to the Colorado River apparently became increasingly warlike and by the 1830's were able to hold their own against Hispano-Mexican soldiers. In the meantime, however, the over-all Indian population of the state had probably been reduced by at least 50,000 due to the high death rates in the missions. Tens of thousands also died as a result of malaria, smallpox, and measles epidemics introduced into the interior by travelers from the coast and from Oregon.

Generally speaking, the Spanish and Mexican periods had very little over-all cultural impact upon Indian people aside from the great population reduction. It seems clear from documentary evidence that the ex-mission Indians, as well as those of nearby regions, remained almost completely indifferent to the materialism of their European and Cholo rulers. It is also clear that native religion generally survived, even in many coastal areas, and that in spite of a few changes in the nature of their material existence the Indian people preserved their fundamental socio-political-ethical systems. On the other hand, a certain pessimism, apathy, and lack of self-confidence—what we would today call a negative self-image—appeared wherever Indians were subjected to intensive anti-native propaganda and the indignity of conquest.

It should also be pointed out that many Spanish-speaking Californians, themselves of mixed race, either because of Indian influences in Mexico, in California, or a combination of both, increasingly adopted an Indian-style attitude towards material possessions. It is conceivable that the Hispano-Mexican and native Californian cultures might ultimately have merged together if it had not been for the entrance into California of aggressive northern Europeans and Anglo-Americans in the 1840's.

The Anglo-American invasion of California became a flood after 1848, a flood which inundated both native and Mexican Californians. The years

from about 1850 through the 1870's were unspeakably terrible for native Californians with at least 80,000 Indians of all ages dying within the span of one generation. We do not need to trace the details of this period of genocide—it is sufficient to note that most of the societies and interrelationships created by California Indians during 15,000 years were shattered or totally destroyed.

The 20,000 Indians remaining in the state in 1880 faced a bleak future. Many groups had lost their entire intellectual-philosophical heritage due to the death of all of their leading people and the systematic terrorization, intimidation, or dispersal of the rest. Others, in more out-of-the-way areas, had managed to salvage part of their heritage but few were able to preserve the legacy intact. All were subjected to degrading anti-Indian propaganda and many had been and were then the victims of an unscrupulous reservation system which was usually nothing more than a scheme to secure cheap Indian labor or enrich government agents.

The modern colonial system commenced in the 1850's for a few Indians and by the 1880's blanketed almost the entire state. It consisted of the establishment of a series of reservations, never adequate in size, where Indian people were under the almost complete dominance of government bureaucrats or missionaries. In spite of reforms carried out in the 1930's Indian reservations (homelands) are still, in fact, colonies in which little self-government is possessed by the Indian people themselves.

The rich non-material heritage of California Indians was, of course, greatly weakened when non-Indian bureaucrats attempted to assume direct control over the internal life of Indian communities. The white value system, as personified by the Federal government, was superimposed upon Indian traditional democracy with inevitable clashes which still continue. At the same time, the government and mission schools sought to destroy the Indian child's faith in his heritage and, in effect, taught him to despise his own parents and grandparents as pagans and savages.

The remarkable thing is, however, that the Indian people, as a living group of human beings, not only managed to survive but also managed to preserve the essence of their Indianness.

One of the great untold stories of the United States, in fact one of the greatest themes of our total history, is the sustained non-violent resistance of Indian people since the period when armed warfare came to an end. The California Indian people did not give up because they were conquered, raped, beaten up physically, robbed, and slandered. Instead they developed a stubborn, tenacious opposition to the white man's rule, an opposition which has never diminished and which today grows stronger.

During the 1870's, 1880's, and 1890's many pan-Indian religious movements swept across California. These movements had a long-term impact on many Indians and undoubtedly served to provide a basis for resistance



to white ideological imperialism. Secular forms of resistance also developed quite early, such as opposition to government schools. The school buildings at Round Valley were burned by the people in 1883, 1912, and 1914 for example.

Beginning about 1910 California Indians began to learn how to appeal to white public opinion to improve conditions. By 1920 at least two organizations, the Society of Northern California Indians and the Mission Indian Federation, were actively seeking justice. By 1917 Indians were utilizing the courts to try to secure the right to vote and in 1924 the right to attend the nearest local public school.

The details of the Indian struggle do not need to concern us here. The main point is that Indian people have survived *as Indians*. They have resisted every form of attack, short of total physical annihilation, successfully. In spite of the efforts of Spaniards, Mexicans, and Anglo-Americans to cause them to disappear they have sustained their Indianness, although at times by a slender thread.

The lesson of this Indian ethnic survival is not one of mere local significance. It serves a universally important indication of the strength of endurance that a people can develop, against even the most terrible odds. Shorn of weapons and rendered outwardly passive, a people can still live on.

And what is more, the Indian people of California have managed to nourish and protect enough of the essence of their Indianness so that it can now be passed on to the younger generation which is, by and large, extremely anxious to receive that legacy. For the white community, Alcatraz, Pit River, and Deganawidah-Quetzalcoatl University can serve to symbolize what is happening in the Indian World. But the revitalization which is now taking place is not merely to be discovered in such headline creating confrontations. On the contrary, of equal or greater significance is the quiet revival of traditional Indian values and other aspects of culture all over the state, among both young and old.

I can assure you that the majority of Indian youth, and old people, are not looking to white society for guidance. They are instead becoming more Indian. They are looking to the traditional Indians as their teachers. They are turning away from what they consider the slick but phony world of the white man.

The ancient, democratic, small, republics of native California possessed one exceedingly great liability. That is, they could be militarily overcome by an aggressive, imperialistic, well-armed, and more numerous enemy. And indeed they were militarily overcome. But out of their democracy there also arose a great strength: the stubborn loyalty of truly free people whose membership in the group was never based upon coercion.

A man can be outwardly conquered, and if he opens his soul to the conqueror he can be inwardly conquered as well. But if he keeps his soul,

he can remain free although his body is in chains. *Conquered but still free*, that is the secret of Indian survival from Alaska to Patagonia!

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

A GREAT MANY SOURCES exist relative to California Indians, but most are highly specialized or of a documentary nature. The basic books dealing with the subject as a whole are Jack D. Forbes, *Native Americans of California and Nevada* (1969); A. L. Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California* (1925); and Robert F. Heizer and M. A. Whipple, eds., *The California Indians, A Source Book* (1951). Also useful are Theodora Kroeber, *The Inland Whale* (1959) and *Ishi in Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America* (1961); Robert F. Heizer, ed., *Aboriginal California*; Jaime d'Angulo, *Indian Tales* (1953). Specialized and regional studies are to be found in several serials, including the University of California *Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, *Anthropological Record*, Archaeological Survey reports, and *Ibero-Americana*. Extensive bibliographies are to be found in the works by Forbes, Kroeber, and Heizer and Whipple, which were cited above.

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## Senator William Gwin: Moderate or Racist?

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*Racism historically has been an integral part of California politics. The question of statehood itself was entwined with the political issues surrounding the existence and spread of slavery. Although the first Constitutional Convention of 1849 declared California a "free state," the convention also came close to barring the immigration of free black people. William M. Gwin, who played a key role at that convention and later served as United States Senator from California, was the state's leading political figure during the 1850's. Gerald Stanley analyses Gwin's attitudes on race, slavery, and secession, and attacks his reputation as a "moderate" on these issues.*

WRITING IN 1876 in his *Memoirs*, William McKendree Gwin, Mississippi Congressman from 1840 to 1842 and California Senator from 1850 to 1861, explained that in 1849 he

... immigrated to California [from Mississippi] for the express purpose of withdrawing himself and his posterity from that part of the country where slavery existed, believing, as he then did and subsequent events have proved, that the institution of slavery would be a curse to the white inhabitants where it prevailed.<sup>1</sup>

As is often the case with reminiscences written late in life, this statement does not square with the facts. In 1864 Gwin himself wrote to his brother that he had migrated to California "determined not to make money, but to devote all my energies to obtaining and maintaining political power."<sup>2</sup> Further, Evan J. Coleman, Gwin's son-in-law and the compiler of his papers, noted that Gwin did not withdraw from the institution of slavery when he moved from Mississippi but rather continued to own slaves in his native state all during the 1850's when he represented California in the United States Senate.<sup>3</sup>

When Gwin wrote his *Memoirs*, however, he characterized himself as a moderate on slavery and secession. He said his views on those two subjects were "persistently misunderstood" and asserted that "no living man was more devoted to the Union of the States."<sup>4</sup> Like Jefferson Davis, the

ex-President of the Confederate States of America, Gwin toiled during Reconstruction trying to justify his support for the South's "lost cause."<sup>5</sup>

Most of Gwin's contemporaries saw him differently. Because of his Southern background and his speeches in the Senate on the eve of the Civil War, his political foes in California called him a "pro-slavery conspirator," a "disunionist," and a "treasonable Judas."<sup>6</sup> One of his admirers, Samuel Sullivan Cox, said of Gwin, "He gave his whole heart to the cause of the Confederacy."<sup>7</sup>

Historians of California politics writing at the turn of the century also denied Gwin's self-proclaimed moderation. In his multi-volume *History of California*, Hubert Howe Bancroft focused on one of Gwin's devious Senate speeches and indicted him for his pro-slavery and secessionist views.<sup>8</sup> Offering this same conclusion in *The Contest for California*, Elijah H. Kennedy maintained that Gwin clearly favored the preservation of slavery and urged secession in the Senate.<sup>9</sup> Two other historians, James M. Guinn and Gertrude Atherton, characterized Gwin and "the chivalry" (his political machine in California) as strongly pro-slavery.<sup>10</sup> The *Memoirs* notwithstanding, Gwin's contemporaries and these early historians were correct in their estimate of his position.

Yet more recent works dealing with Gwin and California politics during the 1850's have accepted his *Memoirs* uncritically and have concluded erroneously that he held moderate views of slavery and secession. For example, Lately Thomas, the pseudonymous author of *Between Two Empires: The Life Story of California's First Senator, William McKendree Gwin*, classified Gwin a moderate because his views on slavery were benevolent and paternalistic and because he left the South in 1849.<sup>11</sup> William H. Ellison, the editor of Gwin's *Memoirs*, also believed that Gwin came to California to rid himself of slavery.<sup>12</sup> Citing Gwin's vote against slavery in the California Constitutional Convention in 1849 and his paternalistic view of the institution as "authoritative evidence" of Gwin's moderation, Ellison concluded in 1940,

In the face of Gwin's nonslavery statements and his actions from the time he arrived in California, it is difficult to understand the attacks on him as a leader of vicious southern "chivalry". . . .<sup>13</sup>

Ten years later Ellison judged Gwin "a Unionist, a believer in the right of states, a loyal American citizen."<sup>14</sup> More recently Donald E. Hargis accepted Ellison's argument and reaffirmed Gwin's sectional moderation.<sup>15</sup>

To explain why a moderate in 1860 supported John C. Breckinridge, the candidate usually identified with the secessionist wing of the Democratic party, these historians cited Gwin's strict constructionist interpretation of the Constitution or his devotion to the Democratic party. Ellison, for instance, maintained that Gwin "supported Breckinridge's policy of state

freedom with regard to domestic institutions, and although he believed the Union was perpetual, he regarded it as a confederacy.”<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, Thomas argued that Gwin’s support of Breckinridge derived from his unflagging loyalty to the Democratic party.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Hargis accounted for Gwin’s political conduct in terms of party loyalty and concluded that he was a “Unionist by inclination . . . [who] did not believe that the South was right in withdrawing from the Union.”<sup>18</sup> Finally, Hallie May McPherson, whose dissertation is the most comprehensive biography of Gwin, offered this curious appraisal of his moderation:

[As] a southern man with close family ties and property interests in the South . . . [his] sympathies were naturally with the Confederacy. On the other hand, he loved the Union and . . . he strongly advocated a policy of conciliation. . . . He believed in neither nullification nor secession, but he did believe in revolution against the violation of constitutional right.<sup>19</sup>

These revisionist historians of Gwin resemble the revisionist historians of the Civil War who have stressed that many, if not most, Southerners held moderate views of slavery and were pushed into secession in 1861.<sup>20</sup> Because they believe that opposing moral principles can and should be reconciled, even at the expense of human freedom, they blame “hyper-emotionalism” for the war that freed black Americans.<sup>21</sup> Arguing that Republicans and abolitionists hardened sectional feelings and prevented compromise, they have concluded that the Civil War was a repressible conflict. Their interpretations worship at the throne of moderation, but, more importantly, they define *immoderation* as opposition to slavery expansion rather than as opposition to slavery itself.

Nearly every historian who has written about Gwin since Gertrude Atherton’s *California: An Intimate History* (1914) has failed to consider his views on slavery critically and has carefully selected parts of his public speeches on the subject to make him a moderate. Indeed, only one, Hallie May McPherson, mentioned that he still owned slaves in Mississippi in 1861.<sup>22</sup>

A study of Gwin’s important speeches and his voting record from 1849 to 1861, however, indicates that his desire to maintain slavery caused him personally, as an individual, to secede from the Union in 1861. While he represented California during this period, he believed slavery was the “foundation of civilization,” and when he thought the institution was threatened in March, 1861, he left the Union.<sup>23</sup> Admittedly, he was not a fire-eater like William L. Yancy of Alabama or Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina. Nevertheless, a Californian who believed secession justifiable and necessary in 1861 is not properly classified as “moderate.”

First, the facade of strict constitutional construction does not explain Gwin’s position on slavery. In fact, there were few, if any, consistent strict



constructionists in the ante-bellum decade. As long ago as 1922 Arthur M. Schlesinger argued convincingly in his widely-read essay, "The States Rights Fetish," that the states rights doctrine has never had any real vitality "independent of underlaying conditions of vast social, economic, or political significance." The doctrine, he concluded, has served only "as a species of protective coloration against the threatening onslaughts of a powerful foe."<sup>24</sup> Buttressing Schlesinger's argument, Ulrich B. Phillips maintained in 1929 that the doctrine of states rights never prevailed in the South. Southerners, Phillips concluded, disagreed about everything from a constitutional point of view except the maintenance of white supremacy.<sup>25</sup> This literature suggests that the strict-constructionist states-rights syndrome explains Gwin no better than it explains the South. Anyway, unlike the self-styled states righters, Gwin voted for huge federal subsidies for a Pacific railroad and a Pacific Electric Telegraph.

Like others masquerading under the banner of states rights, Gwin believed the Union to be a Confederacy in the strict constitutional definition of the term only when it suited his purpose. Moreover, although he was a lifelong Democrat, his devotion to party fails to explain why he supported the Lecompton Constitution in 1858, Breckinridge over Douglas in 1860, and separation instead of Union in 1861. The "party loyalty" interpretation of Gwin avoids the issue that divided the Democratic party in the 1850's, and, in fact, refuses to recognize that the party was divided. Gwin's Southern view of slavery and not his devotion to states rights or party determined his ultimate political loyalty, not the reverse.

Although Thomas, Ellison, Hargis, and McPherson claimed that Gwin's vote against the establishment of slavery in California in 1849 indicated his moderation, that vote did not necessarily mean he opposed the institution. In his *Memoirs* he made plain that he felt the soil and climate of California would prohibit slavery.<sup>26</sup> Besides, he came to the West for political reasons, but at the convention he discovered that the long-standing residents of California distrusted him because of his pro-slavery views. Commenting on this in his *Memoirs*, he wrote,

Their suspicions were great against members of the convention who had recently arrived in the country, and they were especially so against Mr. Gwin to whom they attributed in their imaginations the most dangerous designs upon their property in the formation of a state government.<sup>27</sup>

After he voted against slavery, however, they supported him in his bid to become Senator. Of this transformation Gwin stated,

It was a noble fact that for the first time the native Californian members of the convention and the old residents . . . came to his support almost unanimously, and from that time forward he retained their entire confidence.<sup>28</sup>

The vote against slavery at Monterey was unanimous because many delegates feared that a slavery provision in the Constitution would prevent California from entering the Union. Moreover, pro-slavery and anti-slavery delegates agreed that the anti-slavery provision would serve to keep all Negroes out of the state. This united the Convention which, in fact, voted to prohibit Negroes, whether slave or free, from settling in California.<sup>29</sup> Political expediency rather than moral principle explains Gwin's vote against slavery where both nature and sentiment opposed the institution already.

After California became a state, Gwin voted consistently to protect slavery elsewhere. In 1850 he opposed an attempt to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. He voted against a repeal of the fugitive slave law in 1852, characterizing the motion as "equivalent to introducing a resolution to dissolve the Union."<sup>30</sup> He also voted for the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which in its final form was more the product of the Southern slave interests than the Douglas Democrats.<sup>31</sup> After Republicans and Northern Democrats interpreted the act to mean territorial legislatures could exclude slavery, however, Gwin denounced it.

When the Dred Scott decision declared slaves property and ruled that there could be no such thing a free territory, Gwin insisted that slavery was a judicial question settled irrevocably by the Court. To Gwin blacks belonged in chains; a free Negro was a contradiction in terms. Speaking on the Dred Scott decision, Gwin declared,

If, in 1849, the decision which has been rendered in the recent Dred Scott case had been made, we should have prohibited their [free Negroes] going into California. Our people want none but the white race among us; we do not want Negroes or Chinese. . . .<sup>32</sup>

After the Dred Scott decision, Gwin took bold steps to protect slavery. As chairman of the sub-committee of Democratic Senators who recommended to the Democratic caucus nominations for various committees, he wielded much power. When Stephen A. Douglas, in his famous debates with Lincoln, admitted that in spite of the Dred Scott decision territories could still prevent slavery through unfriendly legislation, Gwin had him removed as Chairman of the Committee on Territories. Then on March 23, 1858, he voted to admit Kansas as a slave state under the Lecompton Constitution, and on May 4 he supported the English Bill which would have granted public land and immediate admission of Kansas to the Union if she voted for slavery again. Finally, in the same Congress he joined the South in voting for a congressional guarantee of slavery in the territories.

In the Thirty-Sixth Congress Gwin again demonstrated his immoderation on slavery. After five Southern Senators followed their states out of the Union in January, 1861, Republicans tried to admit Kansas as a free

state. Their bill passed the Senate by a vote of 36 to 16. All Republicans and all Democrats from free states voted for the bill except Senators Gwin and Milton Latham of California, who abstained. Andrew Johnson of Tennessee and John J. Crittenden of Kentucky, genuine moderates if any existed in 1861, were the only Senators from slave states to vote for the bill.

Gwin's desire to maintain slavery clearly derived from his belief that the institution was a positive good, that it was indeed necessary for the survival of white civilization. Although he refused to speak on the subject of slavery for eight years because, he said, it was "far removed from California," he articulated his position with special clarity during the first week of the Thirty-Sixth Congress. At that time Senator James Mason of Virginia introduced a resolution calling for a committee to investigate John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. Senator Stephen Douglas, however, proposed that the Senate again consider the question of the admission of Kansas into the Union. The highly sectional debate on these resolutions stirred Gwin to defend the South's way of life. Because of increased Republican agitation against the extension of slavery, he declared he could remain silent no longer, impelled by a duty "to maintain the constitutional rights of every section of the Confederacy."<sup>33</sup>

After Senator Clement Clay of Alabama warned Northerners that the election of a Republican president in 1860 would imperil the Union, Gwin rose to agree. He charged that the non-slaveholding states were overestimating Southern Unionism and added that the South would favor separation from the Union in the event of a Republican triumph in 1860. Arguing that secession was possible and practical, he said to the Northern Senators,

I believe that the slaveholding States of this Confederacy can establish a separate and independent government that will be impregnable to the assaults of all foreign enemies. They have the elements of power within their own boundaries, and the elements of strength in those very institutions which are supposed in the North to be their weakness.<sup>34</sup>

Then he declared that the "Northern Party" erroneously believed "that the slave hates his master, and is kept in slavery only by power and fear."<sup>35</sup> On this point Gwin's position resembled George Fitzhugh's, the extreme pro-slavery Southern author who said of the Negro, "He is but a grown up child, and must be governed as a child . . . The master occupies towards him the place of parent or guardian . . ."<sup>36</sup> Presenting a classic defense of slavery, Gwin said,

Not only do they [slaves] not seek freedom, but it is a curse to them when they get it. . . . I do not believe the negro race have ever been so happy, or so nearly approached civilization, at any period from the beginning of the world to the present time, as they do in the slaveholding States of this Confederacy, in a state of slavery.<sup>37</sup>

Turning to the Senate Republicans, he charged that their party "looks to the conquest of the South," and warned that "the South should be prepared for resistance."<sup>38</sup> To Gwin any attempt to interfere with slavery constituted a challenge to biological law. He ended his speech by pleading for the preservation of the Union on these extremist terms, thereafter to remain silent on the slavery issue in the Senate.

When Gwin campaigned for John C. Breckinridge in the fall of 1860, he again proclaimed his Southern principles. In a speech in Sacramento on September 11, he maintained that if the nation applied Douglas's popular sovereignty the Union would be jeopardized. Such a doctrine, he claimed, was "aimed directly against the equal rights of all the States in this Confederacy."<sup>39</sup> After he stressed that all men who loved the Union had a "duty" to resist the doctrine of Douglas, he praised the Breckinridge platform which proclaimed the inviolate right of all citizens to take their property into territories of the United States.

Calling all those who attacked slavery "fanatics," Gwin described their demagoguery as a threat to the "foundation of civilization." Once more he characterized the South as being "able to take care of herself and to protect her rights in or out of the Union." Then he warned, "Whenever the time comes, they [Southerners] can defend their rights, even at the bayonet's point, and they will."<sup>40</sup> Although Gwin said he supported Breckinridge because "he represents my views and principles," his congressional and campaign speeches, which were reprinted only in part in his defensive *Memoirs*, clearly defined the essence of those views and principles.<sup>41</sup> Because of his public statements on slavery and secession, the *Daily Alta California* labeled him a "time-serving, no-principled politician" who sacrificed California to the "Moloch of sectional controversy."<sup>42</sup> The *San Francisco Bulletin* added that he was a "disunionist" who would eventually support a secessionist movement in the South.<sup>43</sup> Time proved the *Bulletin* correct in its prediction.

Gwin's sympathy with secession and the Southern cause manifested itself when he acted as a mediator between the Confederacy and the incoming Republican administration in March, 1861. In his negotiations he sought only to maintain peace between the two governments and not to restore the Union. When he became convinced that war was probable and slavery would be threatened, he refused to negotiate further and personally left the Union.<sup>44</sup>

His peace efforts began when Senator William Seward from New York devised a plan to help his own political career and to maintain the existing tranquillity between the sections. Early in March Seward told Gwin that he too favored the peaceful separation of the states and if appointed Secretary of State would work to that end. At Seward's urging, Gwin wrote Jefferson Davis on March 2, informing the Confederate President that if

Seward became Secretary of State "The inaugural will be pacific, followed by conciliatory policy. This is certain."<sup>45</sup> Then, to convince Lincoln that the South would view the appointment as an amicable gesture, Seward arranged for a meeting between Gwin and the President elect when he arrived in Washington on March 2. Gwin stated in his *Memoirs* that he told Lincoln about the Davis letter, and on the following day Lincoln notified Seward of his pending appointment.<sup>46</sup>

At the same time, however, Lincoln notified Republican Senator Salmon P. Chase from Ohio that he would be the next Secretary of the Treasury. Gwin considered Chase a radical on slavery and protested that the Ohioian's appointment offset any implication of moderation implied by Seward's membership in the Cabinet. Calling on Seward, Gwin described Lincoln's latest appointment as "a declaration of war against the South" and expressed his fear that his own image in the South would be shattered because of the appointment.<sup>47</sup>

In a second letter to President Davis, Gwin indicated that because of Chase's appointment he had changed his mind about the possibility of peace. He showed this second letter to Seward who quickly assured Gwin that Lincoln sought peace and hinted that Chase would not be confirmed anyway. With Gwin's approval, Seward changed the letter to read, "Notwithstanding Mr. Chase's appointment, the policy of the administration would be for peace, and the amicable settlement of all questions between the sections."<sup>48</sup> Gwin read the altered letter and sent it on to Davis by telegraph.

While Gwin was writing letters to Davis, he also acted as a middleman between Lincoln's administration and Martin J. Crawford, Chief of the Commissioners of the Confederacy to the United States.<sup>49</sup> He carried notes between Seward and Crawford until the latter insisted upon some tangible guarantee of peace or direct negotiation with Seward. To arrange for direct negotiations Gwin called on Seward on the morning of March 11, but the Secretary told him that he could not set the time and place for the interview because of a sudden attack of lumbago.<sup>50</sup>

Quick to interpret Seward's sudden illness as a sign that no guarantee of peace would be forthcoming, Gwin informed Crawford that he would no longer act as intermediary. Later he reminisced that the role carried a danger of "deceiving the South into the belief that there would be no war."<sup>51</sup> His peacemaking efforts at an end and his term of office having expired on March 4, Gwin left Washington on March 11 for Mississippi, his plantation, and his slaves.

He remained in Mississippi until he returned to Washington for a brief visit on April 11, 1861. At that time Attorney General Edwin M. Stanton observed that Gwin "had great confidence of the stability and power of the Confederacy" and "sympathizes strongly" with the Confederates.<sup>52</sup>

Gwin then sailed to California, but by that time his political career had



all but ended. In the election of 1860 the state Democratic party split into Douglas and Breckinridge factions resulting in 38,733 votes for Lincoln, 37,999 for Douglas, 33,969 for Breckinridge and 9,111 for Bell. After the election, the new state legislature met on March 20, 1861, to elect a new Senator to fill Gwin's seat. The Republicans, who were still in a minority, joined the Douglas Democrats and elected James A. McDougall, a Democrat professing Union sentiments. Because of Gwin's known sympathy with the South, no one even mentioned his name in the balloting. Then, in the state elections of 1861, the Republicans and Douglas Democrats repudiated the right of secession and together polled more than two-thirds of the state's votes. Republicans that year elected their first governor, Leland Stanford, by a substantial plurality.

After the unionist triumph in September, 1861, Gwin cast all pretense of unionism and moderation aside and became involved in an international scheme to aid the Confederacy. A month after the election he mysteriously boarded a steamer in San Francisco for Cuba. In the Bay of Panama, he was arrested for "treasonous activities."<sup>53</sup> He remained a prisoner at Fort Lafayette, New York, from November 18 to December 2, 1861, and upon his release he returned to Mississippi for nearly a year. Then he sailed to Paris where he lived until June, 1864.

While in Paris, he succeeded in interesting Napoleon III in a project to colonize the Mexican provinces of Sonora and Chihuahua, perhaps with Confederates. After conferring with the Emperor, Gwin sailed to Mexico in June, 1864, only to find that Maximilian, Napoleon's puppet on the Mexican throne, refused to give countenance to the colonization scheme.<sup>54</sup> In October, 1865, after a second visit to Mexico, he returned to the South, first to Texas and then to New Orleans, where he was arrested for a second time. Although he lived for another twenty years, he had no political career after the Civil War.

The most scholarly study of Gwin's colonization scheme, Hallie May McPherson's dissertation, argued that the Sonora episode did not mean that Gwin was a "disunionist" because he believed "... the Union no longer existed. The compact of states was broken by the Administration in the attempt to coerce its principles upon Sovereign States." McPherson concluded that the Sonora project was a "business venture" which had "no connection with the purposes of the Confederacy."<sup>55</sup>

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to conclude that Gwin's colonization scheme favored the cause of the Confederacy. Gwin himself said that he was "highly valued [by Southerners] because I am with the South in this contest."<sup>56</sup> Whatever his ultimate plan, he apparently related it to the Confederate commissioners in Paris and Havana, John Slidell and William Preston, respectively. In a letter dated June 2, 1864, to Judah Benjamin, a member of the Confederate cabinet, Slidell wrote,

Ex-Senator Gwin is on his way to Mexico. His object is to colonize Sonora with persons of southern birth of proclivities residing in California. . . . If carried out its consequences will be most beneficial. . . .<sup>57</sup>

On the twenty-eighth Preston wrote to President Davis,

I found Gwin very anxious to secure friendly relations between Mexico and the Confederacy, as the success of his scheme will depend upon the emigration of Southern men from California.<sup>58</sup>

Further, throughout the war Union generals considered Gwin a Southern conspirator. In January, 1865, General Grant warned Major General McDowell, Union commander in the Pacific, of Gwin's activities in Mexico:

It is known that Gwin, former United States Senator from California, has gone to Mexico and taken service under the Maximilian Government. It is understood also that he has been appointed Governor General of Sonora. The Dr. is a rebel of the most virulent order. . . . May it not be his design to entice into Sonora the dissatisfied spirits of California, and if the opportunity occurs, organize them and invade the State?<sup>59</sup>

From 1849 to 1865 Gwin defended the South's peculiar institution in public speeches and in the United States Senate. His defense of the institution was economically logical, for during the period he still owned a large plantation and many slaves in Mississippi, his *Memoirs* notwithstanding. Although he did not openly advocate secession for the South, and never suggested it for his adopted state of California, his views on neither secession nor slavery are properly designated moderate.

Years later he explained in his *Memoirs* that "Events had occurred that rendered the separation of the states inevitable, with or without war."<sup>60</sup> Another self-proclaimed moderate, Jefferson Davis, explained his actions in almost the same terms. In *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (1881) Davis wrote,

. . . the intolerable grievance . . . was the systematic and persistent struggle to deprive the Southern States of equality in the Union—generally to discriminate in legislation against the interests of their people; culminating in their exclusion from the Territories the common property of the States. . . .<sup>61</sup>

Clearly, if Gwin was a moderate, then the President of the Confederacy himself was. Indeed, the two men's views of sectional issues were very similar, but Southern, rather than moderate, is the appropriate adjective to describe their common ground.

NOTES

1. William H. Ellison, ed., "Memoirs of Hon. William M. Gwin" *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XIX (March, 1940), 8.
2. Gwin to his brother, June 21, 1864, Southampton, France, in "Senator Gwin's Plan for the Colonization of Sonora," Evan J. Coleman, ed., *Overland Monthly*, XVIII (August, 1891), 206.
3. *Ibid.* (June, 1891), 606.
4. Ellison, "Memoirs," (December, 1940), 360-1.
5. See Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government* (New York, 1958). Unlike Davis, however, Gwin suppressed his *Memoirs* during his lifetime.
6. San Francisco *Daily Alta California*, February 3, 1860; *San Francisco Bulletin*, August 1, 1860.
7. Samuel Sullivan Cox, *Union-Disunion-Reunion: Three Decades of Federal Legislation, 1855-1885* (Providence, Rhode Island, 1885), 90.
8. Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco, 1890), 258-59.
9. Elijah H. Kennedy, *The Contest for California* (Boston, 1912), 62-6.
10. James M. Guinn, *A History of California* (Los Angeles, 1907), 204-10; Gertrude Atherton, *California: An Intimate History* (New York, 1914), 165.
11. Lately Thomas, *Between Two Empires: The Life Story of California's First Senator, William McKendree Gwin* (New York, 1969), 47-8. Two graduate theses done at the University of California, Helen Blattner's "The Political Career of William McKendree Gwin," and Hallie May McPherson's "William McKendree Gwin, Expansionist" (1931), also present similar explanations of Gwin's moderation.
12. Ellison "Memoirs" (March, 1940), 25, note 26.
13. *Ibid.*, 277, note 88.
14. William H. Ellison, *A Self-Governing Dominion: California, 1849-1860* (Berkeley, 1950), 309.
15. Donald E. Hargis, "W. M. Gwin: Middleman," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, XL (March, 1958), 21.
16. Ellison, "Memoirs" (December, 1940), 367, note 104.
17. Thomas, *Between Two Empires*, 176 & 213.
18. Hargis, "Middleman," 17 & 131. In the same laudatory tone, Helen Blattner, Gwin's first biographer, called him "a loyal son of the Union [who] found not that he loved the Union less but that he loved the South more." "Political Career," 70 & 131.
19. McPherson, "William McKendree Gwin," 233 & 237.
20. See, for example: Avery O. Craven, *The Coming of the Civil War* (New York, 1942); James G. Randall, "A Blundering Generation," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XXVII (June, 1940), 3-28; David M. Potter, *Lincoln and His Party in the Secession Crisis* (New Haven, 1942); David Donald, *Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War* (New York, 1961); and Roy Nichols, *The Disruption of American Democracy* (New York, 1948).

21. Nichols, *Democracy*, 8.
22. McPherson, "William McKendree Gwin," 233.
23. *New York Daily National Intelligencer*, October 23, 1860.
24. Arthur M. Schlesinger, "The State Rights Fetish," *New Viewpoints in American History* (New York, 1922), 243.
25. Ulrich B. Phillips, "The Central Theme of Southern History," *American Historical Review*, XXXIV (October, 1929), 31. Similarly, by tracing the history of the Whig party below the Mason and Dixon line, Charles G. Sellers, Jr., in "Who Were the Southern Whigs?," *American Historical Review*, LIX (January, 1954), 336, exploded the notion of states rights as a central theme of political history in the ante-bellum period.
26. Ellison, "Memoirs" (March, 1940), 5-6.
27. *Ibid.*, 5.
28. *Ibid.*, 10.
29. J. Ross Browne, *Report of the Debates in the Convention of California on the Formation of the State Constitution* (Washington, D.C., 1850), 43-44, 48-49, 61-76, 137-152. To maintain further the racial purity of California the Delegates passed a resolution urging the Legislature, at its first session, to pass laws "to prohibit free persons of color from immigrating to and settling in this state, and to effectually prevent the owners of slaves from bringing them into this state for the purpose of setting them free." Brown, 48, 76.
30. *Cong. Globe*, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., 1952.
31. Roy F. Nichols, "The Kansas-Nebraska Act: A Century of Historiography," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLIII (September, 1956), 209.
32. *Cong. Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess. 2204.
33. *Cong. Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 124.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*, 125.
36. George Fitzhugh, *Sociology for the South* (Richmond, 1854), as quoted in Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Causes of the Civil War* (New Jersey, 1959), 102.
37. *Cong. Globe*, 36th Cong., 1st Sess., 125.
38. *Ibid.*, 125-6.
39. *New York Daily National Intelligencer*, October 23 1860.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *San Francisco Bulletin*, August 31, 1860.
42. *Daily Alta California*, July 24, 1860.
43. *San Francisco Bulletin*, December 31, 1860, and January 10, 1861.
44. Ellison, "Memoirs" (December, 1940), 362; Frederick Bancroft, *The Life of William H. Seward*, II (New York, 1900), 25-6.
45. *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion*, Series 1, LIII, Supplement, 128.
46. Ellison, "Memoirs" (December, 1940), 363.

47. Gwin, "The Peace Negotiations of 1861," MSS, in "Gwin and Seward - A Secret Chapter of Ante-Bellum History," Evan J. Coleman, ed., *Overland Monthly* (November, 1861), 469; Bancroft, *Life of Seward*, II, 26.
48. Coleman, "Gwin and Seward," 469.
49. The other commissioners were John Forsyth and A. B. Roman.
50. Bancroft, *Life of Seward*, II, 26; Glyndon G. Van Deusen, *William Henry Seward* (New York, 1967), 334.
51. Ellison, "Memoirs" (December, 1940), 365.
52. Edwin M. Stanton to James Buchanan, Washington, April 11, 1860, in *The Works of Buchanan*, John Bassett Moore, ed., (Philadelphia, 1908), 178.
53. Helen B. Walters, "Confederates in Southern California," *Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly*, XXXV (March, 1953), 52.
54. Gwin to the Marquis de Montholon, Fort Jackson, October 15, 1865, in "Senator Gwin's Plan For the Colonization of Sonora," 209-211.
55. McPherson, "William McKendree Gwin," 274-5, 316.
56. Gwin to his brother, Southampton, France, June 1, 1864, in "Senator Gwin's Plan for the Colonization of Sonora," 206.
57. John Slidell to Judah Benjamin, Paris, June 2, 1864, in John Bigelow, *Retrospections of an Active Life* (New York, 1900-1913), II, 190.
58. William Preston to Jefferson Davis, Havana, June 28, 1864, in Bigelow, *Retrospections*, II, 197-8.
59. Benjamin Thomas, "A Threatened Invasion of California," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XIII (March, 1934), 38.
60. Ellison, "Memoirs" (December, 1940), 362.
61. Davis, *Confederate Government*, 83.



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## The Political Development of the Black Community in California, 1850-1950

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*From gold rush days to the Second World War, blacks represented a small racial minority in California. But California blacks sought protection of their rights in political organization at a very early date, and more than any other racial minority in California they have used traditional political organization to gain publicity and leverage. James Fisher discusses black organization and group pressure in the fight against discriminatory legislation.*

THERE IS OFTEN a tendency on the part of the general public to view political representatives first as politicians or "power brokers" and then as representatives responsible to definite constituencies. Obviously, such a view leaves much to be desired in the context of a representative system of government. Historically, this view has also served to obscure the more subtle role of black political representatives. Today, California has only two black congressmen: Augustus F. Hawkins of Los Angeles and Ronald V. Dellums of Berkeley. The state also has six black state legislators. Two represent the Bay Area: Assemblymen Willie L. Brown of San Francisco and John J. Miller of Oakland. Four represent Los Angeles: Assemblywoman Yvonne Watson Brathwaite, Senator Mervyn M. Dymally, and Assemblymen Bill Greene and Leon Ralph. Whether they wish it or not, these black lawmakers symbolically represent the highest political aspirations of the vast majority of black people throughout the state. Indeed, many historical factors account for this perspective. The following comments briefly trace the development of the black community as a viable and participating segment of the political and social life of California from 1850, the year of the admission of the state to the Union, to 1950.<sup>1</sup> To a lesser extent, these comments suggest how social factors such as racism, wars, economic determinants, reform movements, and migration patterns influenced the political awareness, status and objectives of the black community in the history of California.<sup>2</sup> For a representative view, those areas of relatively large and concentrated black populations in California such as the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Area and Los Angeles are focused upon.

To better understand the political behavior of blacks, the California environment must be considered in the context of the entire American West, where, more than in any other region of the United States, the "conflict between the traditional equalitarian creed and the actual treatment accorded the Negro" reached dramatic proportions.<sup>3</sup> The historian Frederick Jackson Turner's interpretation of the significance of the West—an interpretation that inherently includes the liberating ideas of free association and equal opportunity, in vivid contrast to the restrictive orthodoxy of the eastern portion of the United States—did not depict the reality faced by black people in the West. Professor Turner attributed qualities to the American West such as "individualism, economic equality, freedom to rise [and] democracy." However, the case made for the West by Turner ignored black Westerners altogether. For, as the influence of the United States began to expand into the Far West in the 1840's and 1850's, indications of white race prejudice also began to appear.<sup>4</sup> As a consequence of United States dominance and the western movement of substantial numbers of blacks, "Negroes in Territorial California encountered restrictions similar to those found in the East."<sup>5</sup>

As early as 1833, for example, there was evidence that some black people were seriously attracted to the West as a possible improvement over their Eastern environment. In that year, the Third Annual Convention for the Improvement of Free People of Color met in Philadelphia and resolved that "those who may be obliged to exchange a cultivated region for a howling wilderness, we recommend, *to retire into the western wilds, and fell the native forest of America, where the ploughshare of prejudice has as yet been unable to penetrate the soil.*"<sup>6</sup> However, such a spirit of adventure and supreme optimism was not to last for long. The experiences of exchanging "a cultivated region for a howling wilderness" called forth second and more sobering thoughts. Meeting in Sacramento on November 20, 1855, the State Convention of the Colored Citizens of California reflected an unmistakable black disillusionment with the West:

Brethren: Your state and condition in California is one of social and political degradation; one that is unbecoming a free and enlightened people. *Since you have left your homes and peaceful friends in the Atlantic States, and migrated to the shores of the Pacific, with the hopes of bettering your condition, you have met with one continued series of outrages, injustices, and unmitigated wrongs unparalleled in the history of nations.*<sup>7</sup>

It is impossible to reconcile the reality of black people in the West and its attendant racism with the ideal West of Turner. The uniqueness, then, of the American West Turner describes must be qualified where Black people were concerned.

The presence of black people in California and the treatment accorded them often reflected the prejudices and attitudes of non-western regions.

Indeed, between 1850 and 1900, the legislative actions of California closely paralleled the politics, the philosophy and the social policies of older states. This was particularly true where there were determined efforts on the state legislature "to avert anticipated evils."<sup>8</sup> More often than not, those "anticipated evils" were identified with black, Native American, Chinese, and Japanese peoples. Political and social legislation that adversely affected these groups was consistently justified on the high grounds that it was necessary in order to avert the evils that the Eastern and Southern regions of the United States experienced, *i.e.*, crowded conditions in burgeoning urban centers, crime and disorder, competition with honest white labor, and heavy taxes incurred when inferior races became inevitable public charges.<sup>9</sup> Hence, an early California newspaper could state: "We desire only a white population in California."<sup>10</sup> Black people, like whites, had come to California in the nineteenth century seeking a climate in which to assert their individualism; they had come seeking economic equality and opportunity; they had come seeking freedom of upward social mobility on the basis of merit and inclination; finally, they had come seeking effective political power, the power of self-determination, the power to control their own lives and influence the lives of others.

However, nineteenth century California offered black people few opportunities and even fewer freedoms. Instead, black Californians were confronted with a mocking disregard for their social rights and a great number of political proscriptions. English traveller J. D. Borthwick, in 1851, recorder just one example of white California's cynicism in regard to race:

In the mines the Americans seemed to exhibit more tolerance of Negro blood than usual in the states—*not that Negroes were allowed to sit at tables with white men or considered to be all on an equality*, but, owing partly to the exigencies of the unsettled state of society . . . Negroes were permitted to lose their money in the gambling rooms.<sup>11</sup>

Such treatment of black men was neither a praiseworthy example of Western democracy in action nor a substantial improvement over that of other sections of the United States. Interestingly, historian Arthur G. Pettit has observed that during the Western period of Mark Twain's career, between 1861 and 1867, his violently racist attitude toward black men remained essentially unchanged because that attitude "coincided with, rather than deviated from, the Western norm." Samuel Clemens, Pettit further suggested, "found the Far West an ideal temporary society, and a most congenial environment in which to practice his first extensive experiment with the Negro as the comic butt, the minstrel stooge, the inane, foolish 'yassah' man of long standing minstrel tradition."<sup>12</sup> More significant, cynicism and prejudices were translated into proscription, and, by California statutes, the denial of civil rights. Black people were denied the right to testify for or

against white persons in court, suffrage, jury participation, equal education, choice in marriage, use of public facilities and accommodations, pursuit of certain trades, mobility and settlement in the state.<sup>13</sup>

As a consequence of, and often in spite of, these wide-ranging proscriptions, black Californians in the nineteenth century went about the business of devising political strategies in order to realize racial justice, gain fundamental civil liberties, and persuade the state to commit itself to the goal of equality for all. Indeed, at the beginning of the new century, blacks in California were in a position to look back over the past fifty years and point to specific milestones marking their emergence as an active political force in the state. Having survived the many and often scurrilous attacks on their right to immigrate to California in the 1850's, by 1863, blacks had won the right to testify in the state courts.<sup>14</sup> With the courts at last open to them, black people ostensibly were guaranteed the means to protect life and property. Social dignity had always been a high priority for black people in California, and, in 1864, after a series of court suits, they officially won the right to ride the street cars in San Francisco.<sup>15</sup> In 1870, after the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment (which the state of California did not accept until 1962) the franchise was expanded to include California blacks as well as blacks throughout the nation.<sup>16</sup> After 1870, the black community of California well realized that political influence depended on its ability to gain patronage, effect electoral reprisals when necessary, and place representatives of its choice in public office. Not at all coincidental with this political thrust on the part of blacks was the fact that, after 1870, black jurors participating in judicial proceedings were not uncommon in the state.<sup>17</sup> In 1880, the legislature finally eliminated from state laws all references to separate schools for black (but not Chinese) children. Since the 1850's, the customary practice in California was to create and maintain distinct "colored" and "white" schools. In 1890, the California Supreme Court declared that "separate schools cannot be established for colored children."<sup>18</sup> By 1883, San Francisco businessman James E. Brown became the first black man to be appointed to an office of public trust in California.<sup>19</sup> Finally, in 1897, a public accommodations, or civil rights, act was sanctioned by the lawmakers of the state.

In terms of political significance, the methods and means by which blacks in California encountered and adapted to their Pacific Coast environment by 1900 were perhaps more important than specific milestones. In struggling for first class citizenship, black leaders passed resolutions, circulated petitions, presented memorials to the state legislature, and, in one instance, even framed an amendment to the California constitution in order clearly to transmit the grievances of their people. They supported a black press through which they voiced and debated their collective and individual opinions. Statewide conventions and public rallies, local group and church

meetings, and annual celebrations of memorable events were held regularly in order to dramatize racial injustices. Also, such meetings served to bring blacks together to devise the necessary strategies to attack injustices perpetrated against the black community. By celebrating the Fourth of July, the issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, and the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, blacks in the nineteenth century consciously sought, first, to exhibit their patriotism and loyalty to the Union and the Republican party; second, to express themselves on questions relating to the Civil War (e.g., black soldiers and the colonization of the Freedmen); and, third, to press their demand for the vote. Similarly, the statewide Colored Conventions of 1855, 1865, 1873, and 1882 were concrete examples of the use to which blacks put the convention format in determining methods to redress pressing grievances. The Colored Convention of 1855, for example, created the State Executive Committee, a legislative lobbying organization. The founding of the *Mirror of the Times*, California's first black newspaper, was another contribution stemming from the gathering of 1855.<sup>20</sup> The Colored Convention of 1865 produced a memorial arguing for black suffrage and a constitutional amendment to alter California's voting regulations.<sup>21</sup> The Colored Convention of 1873 called attention to the poor quality and segregated nature of black public education in California. Besides dissatisfaction with education, the meeting in 1873 produced the first signs of black dissatisfaction with the Republican party and its policy regarding political patronage for blacks. The next year, the Equal Rights League was founded by Philip Bell, editor of the San Francisco *Elevator* and long-time advocate of black political rights. Because of the lack of political recognition for black Californians, the Equal Rights League declared its independence of the Republican party and supported the Democratic ticket in 1877.<sup>22</sup> This revolt on the part of a segment of California's black leadership was repeated in 1882. The Colored Convention of 1882, after overcoming vigorous opposition, decided that supporting the Democratic party would result in more patronage and political rewards for blacks.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, the founding of the Afro-American Leagues, beginning with the city of San Francisco in 1891, represented the concern of black leaders for greater economic opportunities and a sharing in the political spoils derived from black votes. Leaders in the various Afro-American Leagues, however, realized that it was necessary to combine economic and political concerns if they were to undercut the influence of those in the black community who would too readily substitute the Booker T. Washington doctrine of self-help and material advancement for active political participation. Perhaps more than anything, the Leagues' emphasis on racial solidarity represented a protective attitude toward the rights gained by the black community in nineteenth century California.<sup>24</sup>

The first half of the twentieth century, 1900 to 1950, found spokesmen



in the California black community attempting to consolidate the gains of the 1800's and, with due consideration for changing and enlightened attitudes of the general public toward race, to develop effectively the electoral (political) tools that would secure extended opportunities for blacks in the state's political and social affairs. In 1914-1915, for example, blacks successfully fought against what they believed to be a resurgence of segregated education in the town of Allensworth, Tulare county. Black leaders in all sections of California—already greatly disturbed by signs of growing discrimination in the state—were incensed and outraged when white Assemblyman Fred C. Scott of Visalia, in January, 1915, introduced a legislative bill that would have provided the black town with \$50,000 for an industrial school. They strongly protested and lobbied against the Allensworth plans for a school that obviously, they believed, would be an all-black facility. Oakland's black newspaper, *Sunshine*, on March 20, spoke for many concerned race leaders when it declared: "In view of our peculiar situation here [in California] we must oppose all forms of separation."<sup>25</sup> In 1921, the active vigilance of California's first black Assemblyman, Frederick Roberts of Los Angeles, resulted in the barring from schools all educational materials that reflected negatively on minorities.<sup>26</sup> Although they proved ineffectual, in 1919 and again in 1923, civil rights measures in the area of public accommodations were passed by the state legislature.<sup>27</sup> The Great Depression of the 1930's challenged the resourcefulness of blacks economically, as well as politically. By October, 1933, black people on relief comprised 17.8% of the total black population (81,048) in California. What particularly alarmed black spokesmen was the fact that blacks made up only 1.4% of the state's inhabitants, but comprised 4.3% of the State Relief Administration's case load.<sup>28</sup> The reaction of black Californians to the economic crisis was expressed clearly in political terms. Waging a vigorous campaign on the economic issues of the day, Democrat Augustus F. Hawkins defeated the staunchly Republican Roberts in 1934. Hence, Assemblyman Hawkins became the second black legislator and, at age 27, the youngest legislator in the history of California. Hawkins remained at his post until 1962, when he became the first black United States Congressman from California. More important, Hawkins' victory indicated that blacks in California were ready for a new deal. By the middle of the 1930's, California's estimated 57,000 black voters had heeded the popular, but erroneous, axiom: "Lincoln freed us and Roosevelt feeds us."<sup>29</sup>

In 1941, Governor Culbert L. Olson appointed Edwin L. Jefferson of Los Angeles the first black judge in California. Jefferson's appointment constituted the opening shot of a long, frustrating struggle that was at once economic and political. Led by Assemblyman Hawkins, black Californians, along with their white supporters, sought to curb the spread of postwar discrimination in employment. The rapid population growth of blacks cer-

tainly necessitated stronger regulations in regard to job equality. California's wartime employment opportunities (especially in the shipbuilding industry) during the first half of the 1940's attracted thousands of blacks from the South. From 1940 to 1950, the number of blacks rose from 124,306 (or 1.8% of the total population of 6,907,387) to 462,172 (or 4.4% of the total population of 10,586,223).<sup>30</sup> Throughout the 1940's and 1950's, Assemblyman Hawkins and those proponents of equal employment labored unceasingly. Finally in 1959, the California legislature passed a Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) law. But, as the historian Walton Bean suggests, "the law had little effect on the total [employment] situation."<sup>31</sup>

BLACK POPULATION OF CALIFORNIA,  
1850-1950\*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Decade Increase</i>	<i>Black Population</i>	<i>Per cent of State Total</i>	<i>Decade Increase</i>
1850	92,591	--	962	1.0	--
1860	379,994	310.4	4,086	1.1	326.0
1870	560,247	47.4	4,272	0.8	4.6
1880	864,694	54.3	6,018	0.7	40.8
1890	1,213,398	40.3	11,322	0.9	88.3
1900	1,485,053	32.4	11,045	0.7	2.4
1910	2,377,549	60.1	21,645	0.9	95.9
1920	3,426,861	44.1	38,763	1.1	79.0
1930	5,677,251	65.7	81,048	1.4	109.3
1940	6,907,387	21.7	124,306	1.8	58.3
1950	10,586,223	53.3	462,172	4.4	271.5

By the end of 1948, Assemblyman Hawkins was joined in Sacramento by a second black Assemblyman. Representing the 17th Assembly district of Alameda county, William Byron Rumford became the subject of intense controversy when he successfully sponsored the Fair Housing Act of 1963. The law not only made discrimination in 70% of California housing against public policy, but also created the state machinery to enforce its anti-discrimination provisions. In November, 1964, California voters indicated their opposition to residential desegregation by approving the Constitutional Amendment Proposition 13 and, thereby, nullifying the Rumford Act. It was not until May, 1967, that the United States Supreme Court ruled Proposition 13 unconstitutional. Nevertheless, in 1948, Assemblymen Hawkins and Rumford represented the whole of California's black population. In 1949, the two Assemblymen made their combined presence felt in the legislature by successfully sponsoring legislation that discontinued segregation in the National Guard and eliminated references to race and religion from employment applications.<sup>32</sup> Still, by 1950, more than a few

\*Source: Rosaline Levenson, "The Negro Vote in California in 1952." (MA thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1953), 3.

black spokesmen would have disputed the assertion made in 1948 by the editor of the Los Angeles *Sentinel*: "Jim Crow is just about dead in California."<sup>33</sup>

Out of the maze of restrictions imposed upon blacks in California between 1850 and 1950 and the vexatious problems which resulted, obvious strains appeared, disappeared, and reappeared within the black community. Black people neither perceived nor redressed their grievances uniformly. Around the turn of the century, for example, a sense of profound frustration among influential segments of the black leadership (especially those under Booker T. Washington's influence) underscored a slow move from political activity to political strategem. However, such a move did not represent an absolute retreat from politics by blacks, but merely a search for viable alternatives to what appeared to many blacks a preoccupation with politics. In 1902, the respected black editor George Watkins wrote in his San Francisco *Pacific Coast Appeal*: "To our mind the Negro has wasted entirely too much of his valuable time fooling with politics."<sup>34</sup> Then, too, strong personalities and varying political philosophies contributed to many of the strains within the black community. Such internal strains frequently led to attempts by the more vocal leaders in the community to dramatize their discontent by doubling efforts to circulate petitions, introduce memorials in the state legislature, hold public rallies and demonstrations, convene conventions, write editorials and broadsides, pass resolutions, campaign to unseat particularly obnoxious public officials, run for public office, initiate law suits, and bolt party affiliations.

Four significant factors, then, contributed to the making of the history of black people in California. First, there was the idea of the uniqueness of the West as theory and black people in the West as reality. Second, by leaving their places of origin, black people attempted to escape flagrant intolerance, but were caught up again in the snares of racial prejudice once they arrived on the Pacific Coast. Third, in order to gain and then maintain many of their most fundamental liberties, blacks in California had to struggle long and persistently against what often appeared to be insurmountable disadvantages. Finally, the diversity, strains, and continuity of black leadership greatly, and sometimes adversely, affected the efforts of blacks to overcome racial injustice. This was especially true in the 1930's and 1940's when the Democratic party attracted a significantly large number of traditional black Republicans. Within this setting, the political and social development of the black community in California from 1850 to 1950 might be examined more fully.

Hence, from a mid-twentieth century vantage point, the black community was able to assess its political development over the last one hundred years. While not completely successful in eliminating the obstacles of racial prejudice, the state's black leaders turned to the 1950's with the

confidence that it was only a matter of time before black people became full participants in the political life of California. However, two decades were to pass before black spokesmen accepted the view of California's only black state Senator, Mervyn Dymally: "Blacks have made this determination without saying so publicly—they are moving toward political control of their communities."<sup>35</sup> The implications of Senator Dymally's statement evince an extraordinary challenge for the political structure of the state in the 1970's. Senator Dymally's statement further suggests that the realization of electrical power through effective participation in the political structure has roots deep in the history of the political development of the black community in California.

## NOTES

1. "The black community" is a collective term. It is used here to denote the recognizably black segments of the population of California. More important, the term "the black community" refers to an aggregate of black people who, although often widely dispersed geographically in the state, share the basic conditions of a common history and life. With rare exceptions, such commonality includes experiences of racial persecution, social discrimination, and political proscriptions. The name of a given city or county used in conjunction with "black community" denotes individual black communities of California, e.g., the San Francisco black community.

2. Although much research on a national and regional scale has been done in black history, especially since the advent of the Civil Rights movement in the early 1960's, little significant study has been achieved in the area of Western black history. More specifically, the history of black people in California has been paid scant attention. A few exceptions, however, can be mentioned: A. Odell Thurman, "The Negro in California to 1890" (MA thesis, University of the Pacific, Stockton, 1945); James A. Fisher, "A Social History of the Negro in California, 1860-1900" (MA thesis, Sacramento State College, 1966); Edward E. France, "Some Aspects of the Migration of the Negro to the San Francisco Bay Area Since 1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1962); Lawrence Brooks deGraaf, "Negro Migration to Los Angeles, 1930 to 1950" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1962); Francis M. Lortie, "San Francisco's Black Community, 1870-1890: Dilemmas in the Struggle for Equality" (MA thesis, San Francisco State College, 1970), and Phillip Montesano, "Some Aspects of the Free Negro Question in San Francisco" (MA thesis, University of San Francisco, 1967). While Thurman's treatment of his subject is superficial and inadequately researched (lacking the use of even one of the six black newspapers of the period he studies), the studies of France, deGraaf, Lortie, and Montesano are narrow in time and lacking in breadth. See also: Delilah L. Beasley, *The Negro Trail Blazers of California* (Los Angeles, 1919); Rudolph M. Lapp, "The Negro in Gold Rush California," *Journal of Negro History* [hereafter cited as *JNH*], XLIX (1964), 81-98; Earle H. West, *A Bibliography of Doctoral Research on the Negro, 1933-1966* (Ann Arbor, 1969).

3. Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma, The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (Second ed., New York, 1962); Carl N. Degler, *Out of Our Past, The Forces That Shaped Modern America* (New York, 1959), 185.

4. Jack D. Forbes, *Afro-Americans in the Far West: A Handbook for Educators*

(Berkeley, 1966), 23; according to some records, prejudice against Indians and blacks did not exist in California prior to 1848, John Walton Caughey, ed., *The Jacob Y. Stover Narrative: Southwest from Salt Lake City in 1849* (San Francisco, 1937), 177.

5. Eugene H. Berwanger, *The Frontier Against Slavery: Western Anti-Negro Prejudice and the Slavery Extension Controversy* (Urbana, Illinois, 1967), 63.

6. George R. Woolfolk, "Turner's Safety-Valve and Free Negro Western Migration," *JNH*, L (1965), 191; Louis R. Mehlinger, "The Attitude of the Free Negro Toward African Colonization," *ibid.*, I (1916), 276-301; Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States*, I (Second ed., New York, 1963), 141-146. Emphasis belongs to present writer.

7. *Ibid.*, I, 373-374; Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers*, 55. Emphasis belongs to the present writer. See also: *Proceedings of the First State Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California; held at Sacramento, November 20th, 21st, and 22nd, in the Colored Methodist Church, 1855* (Sacramento, 1855), 3.

8. Lucile Eaves, *A History of California Labor Legislation* (Berkeley, 1910), 104.

9. Joseph Ellison, "The Struggle for Civil Government in California: 1846-1850," *California Historical Society Quarterly* [hereafter cited as *CHSQ*], X (1931), 152; California, *Journal of the Assembly*, 1858, 523-525.

10. San Francisco *Californian*, March 5, 1849.

11. J. D. Borthwick, *Three Years in California* (Oakland, 1948), 134-135. Emphasis belongs to the present writer.

12. Arthur G. Pettit, "Mark Twain's Attitude Toward the Negro in the West, 1861-1867," *Western Historical Quarterly*, I (1970), 61-62.

13. France, "Migration of the Negro," 6-7; Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers*, 54, 61-62; Eugene H. Berwanger, "The Black Law Question in Anti-Bellum California," *Journal of the West*, VI (1967), 205-220.

14. Berwanger, *Frontier Against Slavery*, 69; J. Ross Browne, *Report of the Debates in the Convention of California, 1849* (Washington, D.C., 1850) 138-152; Peter Burnett, *Recollections and Opinions of an Old Pioneer* (New York, 1880), 220-221; James A. Fisher, "The Struggle for Negro Testimony in California, 1851-1863," *Southern California Quarterly*, LI (1969), 313-324.

15. Sacramento *Daily Union*, October 5, 1864; San Francisco *Pacific Appeal*, July 18, 1863; the manuscripts of the *Charlotte L. Browne, et al* case can be found in the document collection of the California Historical Society, San Francisco. See also the Mary "Mammy" Pleasant file in the California Section of the State Library, Sacramento.

16. Brainerd Dyer, "One Hundred Years of Negro Suffrage," *Pacific Historical Review*, XXX (1968), 8. Opposition to black suffrage in California, by and large, was overshadowed by official hostility to the Chinese, who outnumbered blacks in 1870 by 11 to 1, or 49,000 to 4,200: United States, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Ninth Census of the United States, 1870: Population*, 14-15. On January 13, 1870, Senator William M. Gwin, Jr., of Calaveras county, expressed the opinion that the Fifteenth Amendment would degrade the white race to the level of blacks and Chinese. Gwin was particularly concerned over the effect the amendment might have on Chinese in California: "The Chinese population among us is composed almost entirely of males. Of sixty-five thousand Chinese in this State at least fifty thousand are men of voting age." *Union*, January 14, 1870.

17. *Ibid.*, May 26, 1870; February 13, 1872; Oscar Tully Shuck, ed., *Historical Abstract of San Francisco* (San Francisco, 1897), 53; Philip A. Bell, the black editor of the San Francisco *Elevator* from 1865 to the 1880's, vigorously objected to the choosing of twelve black men to sit on a coroners jury in the case of a black man's



death. Apparently, editor Bell believed a bad precedent was in the making: *San Francisco Elevator*, November 7, 1874.

18. *Ninth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Instruction of the State of California*, 1880, 5-8; *California, Statutes* (1880), c. XLIV; *Union*, October 9, 1880; *Wysinger v Crookshank*, 82 Cal 588, 720 (1890).

19. James E. Brown to W. W. Moreland, December 7, 1883, *Applications for Notarial Appointment*, State Archives, Sacramento.

20. The *San Francisco Mirror of the Times* was a short-lived weekly, lasting about fourteen months. Although initially established by the Colored Convention of 1855, the weekly was not published until late in 1856. *San Francisco Daily Alta California*, September 9, 1856; *Pacific Appeal*, June 7, 1862; *Proceedings of the Second Annual Convention of the Colored Citizens of the State of California; Held in the City of Sacramento, December 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th 1856* (San Francisco, 1856), 57-62.

21. *Proceedings of the California State Convention of Colored Citizens, 1865* (San Francisco, 1865), 15; *Union*, January 6, 1866; John H. Dorsey, "A Natural Leader of Men," *San Francisco Negro Historical and Cultural Society's California History Series*, II (1965), 2-3.

22. Dorsey, "A Natural Leader," 2-3; *Elevator*, July 4, 11-18, 1874; *San Francisco Pacific Coast Appeal*, May 3, 1902; *Pacific Appeal*, November 11, 1876, June 1-8, 1878.

23. *San Francisco Daily Morning Call*, October 12, 14, 21, 1882; George Tinkham, *California Men and Events, 1769-1890* (Stockton, 1915), 290; T. B. Morton, *Vindication of Hon. M. M. Estee* (San Francisco, 1894), 4-5.

24. *San Francisco Sentinel*, September 20, December 6, 1890; *A Brief History of the Afro-American League of San Francisco; With Some Reference to Its Objectives and What It Has Accomplished* (San Francisco, 1895), n.p.; *Souvenir Programme of the Afro-American League of San Francisco* (San Francisco, 1902), 1-5.

25. *Los Angeles California Eagle*, October 3, 1914, January 23, 1915; *Los Angeles New Age*, October 24, 1913; Beasley, *Negro Trail Blazers*, 154-157; *San Francisco Chronicle*, January 10, 1915; *Oakland Sunshine*, March 20, 1915.

26. *California Eagle*, April 2, 1921.

27. *Statutes* (1919), c. CCX (1923), c. CCXXXV. See *Annual Reports of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1915-1938* (New York, 1938), 45.

28. Federal Emergency Relief Administration, *Unemployment Relief Census, October, 1933*; H. Dewey Anderson, *Who Are On Relief in California?* (Sacramento, 1939), 3.

29. *California Eagle*, June 26, November 6, 1936.

30. California, Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Fair Employment Practices, *Negro Californians: Population, Employment, Income, and Education* (Sacramento, 1963), 9; Warren S. Thompson, *Growth and Change in California's Population* (Los Angeles, 1955), 76.

31. Charlotta Bass, *Forty Years: Memoirs from the Pages of a Newspaper* (Los Angeles, 1960), 138; Walton Bean, *California, An Interpretive History* (New York, 1968), 516.

32. *Statutes* (1949), c. CMXXXVIII; *Journal of the Assembly*, 1949, 221, 3126.

33. *Los Angeles Sentinel*, October 7, 1948; *Perez v Sharp* 32 Cal 198 (1948).

34. *Pacific Coast Appeal*, January 18, 1902.

35. Quoted in Robert Maynard, "Blacks Seek Power in the System," *San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle: This World*, July 25, 1971.

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## Golden Mountain of Lead: The Chinese Experience in California

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*It is difficult to over-estimate the role of the Chinese in California history. Chinese labor played a major part in the development of mining, railroads, large-scale agriculture, and urban industry. Racial hostility toward Chinese profoundly effected social class structure, ethical values, and the political environment of nineteenth-century California. The anti-Oriental prejudices first applied to the Chinese were easily passed on to the Japanese and Filipinos. Philip Choy provides a general survey of the role played by Chinese in California history.*

*"Our knowledge of any past event is always incomplete, probably inaccurate, beclouded by ambivalent evidence and biased historians, perhaps distorted by our own patriotic or religious partisanship."<sup>1</sup>*

PERSISTENT IN our presentation of history are patriotic themes: America the melting pot, America the asylum for the oppressed, America the land of opportunity. Through this indoctrination we have tried to mold our cosmopolitan population into the patterns of American tradition.

The history of the ethnic minorities is a story inconsistent with these themes. To avoid contradiction, ethnic conflict and its history have therefore conveniently been eliminated from the annals of American history, evidently by the myth that we are all in the one big melting pot.

Historians and sociologists have refuted the theory of the melting pot. Walton Bean wrote: "In California the melting pot in essence was a pressure cooker." Similarly, Stanford Lyman said: "If there was a melting pot, someone forgot to light the fire."<sup>2</sup>

It is often pointed out that the Jews, Germans, Irish, Italians, Slavs, and all immigrants shared the common experience of prejudices and rejection in the land of promise. Unlike the European immigrant, and like the native Indians and the blacks who were not immigrants by choice, Asians wore a racial uniform. The salient factor is that neither the Chinese nor any other

colored minorities were ever considered to be an ingredient in that melting pot.

Over the centuries the American concept of the Chinese in America and abroad has been a fabrication of contradictory myths. These myths are both flattering and unflattering, depending on the socio-historical climate. Chinese have been held in high esteem and held in contempt, treated with affection, alluded to as being honest, industrious, and highly civilized and despised as being deceitful, immoral and heathen.

The story of the Chinese in America involves the history of two nations separated by the Pacific. Events following the Age of Discovery were to shape the destinies of these two nations: in America, the rise of a new nation, the United States; in Asia the decline of one of the world's oldest civilizations, China.

In the battle for dominance of China trade, western nations colonized and exploited Southeast Asia. After stubborn resistance, China's doors were battered down in defeat by the British in the Opium War of 1839-1842. The opening of China's doors exposed an empire already in decay, possessed by internal rebellion, over-population, lack of arable land, and plagued by natural floods and droughts.<sup>3</sup> Following the opium war, increased import of opium and other western goods undermined the economy. The southwest provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien, having the earliest and more constant exposure to the west, were most adversely affected. It was from the major districts centering about the Pearl River Delta, in the province of Kwangtung, that the people emigrated to the United States during the nineteenth century. Widespread banditry, secret society activities, and local wars within that province were additional internal disorders which uprooted the Chinese.<sup>4</sup>

The majority of the population was bounded by strong family ties rooted in the traditions of Confucian orthodoxy. Filial piety demanded the performance of duties towards the family and ancestral worship. Negligence of these duties would provoke disapproval and adverse comments. The population was not prone to emigrate. To leave home was a major decision to be made only under the most dire circumstances. These conditions were found in the province of Kwangtung in the nineteenth century.

Concurrent with these conditions, the spirit of emancipation spread throughout Europe in the 1830's. A search for labor to work in European colonies was made to substitute for slavery. The Chinese, seeking economic relief and opportunity abroad, were sent throughout the world to work in the European colonies. What was intended to be a voluntary system of indentured labor resulted in the notorious "coolie" trade, a system no better, if not worse, than the African slave trade. People, including Chinese, and ships of all nations participated in this lucrative trade of human cargo. The system was well established in China after 1845.<sup>5</sup> To

replace the African slaves the world now looked toward China or India. Very early in California politics the issue was raised as to whether measures should be taken to restrict Chinese immigration.

To develop California's natural resources, journalists and politicians advocated the introduction of Chinese labor under contract "as an alternative by which benefits of slavery might be enjoyed without some of the external appearance of the system,"<sup>6</sup> or to "induce a further immigration and settlement of the Chinese to whom the climate and character of these lands [swamplands] are peculiarly suited."

When Senator George B. Tingley introduced a "coolie bill" to authorize the State to contract Chinese laborers, the bill passed the Assembly, but was defeated by forces led by Philip A. Roach. Governor John Bigler also retaliated with a special anti-Chinese message to the legislature.<sup>7</sup>

The aversion to the Chinese had already permeated the minds of Americans by biased reports of early missionaries, traders and diplomats in China, even before the discovery of gold in California.<sup>8</sup> The debates centering around the issue of importing Chinese labor served only to stir up these latent negative images. In the next decades the Pacific Coast became an Asiatic frontier. The prevailing sentiment of California was anti-Chinese, the moods were hostile, the tone was racial. The underlying issue was the struggle between the society of the free working class verses the monopolies of the capitalists through a system of caste labor. Labor utilized the feelings against the Chinese to build powerful alliances. Anti-Chinese agitation was not a passing phase in California politics. It persisted for decades in shaping the destiny of California's economy.

Chinese in 1849 were mainly of the merchant class and they enjoyed a reputation of "sobriety, order and obedience to laws."<sup>9</sup> These merchants were astute enough to realize that they were strangers in a strange land. In their eagerness to fit themselves into the California scene, they retained a prominent local citizen, Selim E. Woodworth, as their counsel to act as intermediary.

The year 1852 marked a great influx of the Chinese. Many of these Chinese came under a credit ticket system. By this system, passage was advanced to the emigrant and the debtor was expected to repay this debt out of his future earnings. From descriptions by early writers such as Borthwick and Charles Nordhoff there was little indication of slavery. Borthwick, touring the mines, speculated "it was well known that whole shiploads of Chinamen came . . . under a species of bondage . . . under control by some mysterious celestial influence." He also witnessed that, "their camp was wonderfully clean . . . a great many of them at their toilet, getting their head shaved, or plaiting . . . pigtails, but most of them were at dinner." They were hospitable enough to invite him to dinner.

What Borthwick speculated as the "mysterious celestial influence" was

more likely the contract labor system whereby the labor agent, often a merchant, provided the laborer with food, clothing and lodging, and depending on the situation, paid also for his passage from the native land. At the end of the month the expenses were deducted from the wages of the laborer. It was inevitable that this led to exploitation. By means of this system, many of California's industries had their beginnings. The Chinese laborer worked on the railroads which opened up the vast frontiers, reclaimed swamp lands for farming, and farmed the land. Not all the contractors were Chinese. When profits were huge, as in the case of the railroads, the white agents were in control.<sup>10</sup> Although condemned as immoral when perpetrated by the Chinese, contract labor was in actuality a common practice in the United States. "An Act to Encourage European Immigration," passed by the Congress on July 4, 1864, was in fact an official sanction to the contract system.

In 1852 the formation of Chinese camps along rivers and canyons were noticeable throughout the entire gold region. Hostilities with whites began in the mines followed by decades of invidious and humiliating race legislation. State and local laws were passed again and again in spite of the fact that they were in violation of federal commerce laws and with existing treaty agreements between China and the United States.<sup>11</sup> The hostility heightened during periods of depression and recession. The Chinese were especially vulnerable at these times. The decade of the 70's was characterized by the rise and coalition of labor unions and anti-coolie associations with San Francisco leading the movement.<sup>12</sup> The hysteria was enough to incite a Joint Congressional Committee of Congress to investigate the Chinese question in San Francisco in 1876. When that was not enough, California's new Constitution included a special section on the Chinese.<sup>13</sup> Memorials and protests from the Pacific Coast states ultimately pressured Congress to pass legislation for Chinese exclusion. In 1882 the first of a series of Exclusion Acts was passed and then re-enacted every ten years until in 1902 all exclusion acts were extended indefinitely.

Following the 1882 exclusion act anti-Chinese riots and boycotts failed to abate.<sup>14</sup> By the last decade of the nineteenth century, the Chinese were driven from rural districts into isolated areas within the metropolis, forming the ghetto Chinatowns of today.

At the end of the century the Chinese were shut off from the mainstream, dominated by provincialism within, and faced with discrimination from without. Only the merchant elite made contacts with the outside world, excepting of course, those Chinese engaged in the service industries as laundry men, houseboys, etc. The affairs of the community were now firmly under the influence of the traditional organizations, whose orientation was towards the native land.<sup>15</sup>

The outlook of the typical Chinese was that of a sojourner. His purpose

was to achieve economic success as soon as possible and return to China with the evidence of his achievement. Many a returned sojourner had been held in high esteem, especially when his achievements included the benevolence of contributing to building roads and schools for his home village. He in turn enjoyed the prestigious label of "Gum Shan Hak" (Guest from the Golden Mountain). Those even with moderate success were looked upon with envy. This newly won social status inspired other members of the village to venture abroad. For some, the return journey took longer than anticipated and in many cases hopes were never fulfilled.

Before the exclusion acts, the Chinese laborers generally were not able to bring their families with them due to economic reasons. The type of work they were engaged in, railroad building, reclamation, and agriculture was migratory and temporary. It was the merchants, or those with established occupations, who had the means to bring their spouses or to take a concubine in the United States. The disparity between men and women was therefore great, and consequently the population of the native-born Chinese was small. In 1900 the excess of male over female was 86.6% and the native-born Chinese was 10% of the total Chinese population in the United States.<sup>16</sup> Children were raised as Chinese and they accepted Chinese values of the old world.

Even under the influence of the value system of the old world there was the emergence of the Chinese-American consciousness. Chinese-American organizations began to appear. In 1895, an organization known as the Native Sons of the Golden West (later changed to Chinese American Citizens Alliance) was chartered in San Francisco by a small group of native-born Americans of Chinese ancestry.<sup>17</sup> Their primary goal was to "quicken the spirit of American patriotism . . . to make secure their citizen rights."<sup>18</sup>

Politics in China were to continue to reinforce the Chinese orientation for the next three decades. China at the end of the nineteenth century was on the verge of collapse after half a century of assault by western powers. In a last effort to save China, a group of young scholars headed by Kang-Yu-Wei and Liang Chi Chao initiated a reform movement under the Emperor Kang Ksu. The movement failed and the Emperor was imprisoned by his aunt, the Empress Dowager, Tsu Hsi. Both Kang-Yu-Wei and Liang Chi Chao fled overseas with a price on their heads. Contemporary with these activities was another party led by Dr. Sun Yat Sen, who believed in revolution rather than reform. Sun also fled overseas with a price on his head. Both the reform party and the revolutionary party sought support and finance from the overseas Chinese population. During the next decades, Chinese communities were intricately entangled with activities to establish military schools and newspapers.<sup>19</sup>

The shock of World War I shattered America's prevailing faith in the



melting pot. Suspicion of the loyalty of her European immigrant stock led to investigations which revealed cases of third generation Americans who could not speak English. Many committees were formed to further the great "Americanization" movement.

For the Chinese, the process contained many contradictions. Americanization was ceremonial in the guarantee of equal rights and equal opportunities, but in practice, the door to social, political, and economic equality was closed.<sup>20</sup> His racial uniform stigmatized him as a member of a race which was ostracized. Racial consciousness intensified both within himself and in the community which he sought to be a part of. One student in an essay wrote:

My patriotism is of a different hue and texture. It was built on the mound of shame. The ridicule heaped upon the Chinese race has long fermented within my soul. I have concluded that we, the younger generation, have nothing to be proud of except the time-worn accomplishment of our ancient ancestors; we have been living in the shadow of these glories, hoping that these arts and literature of the past will justify our present.

The second generation of Chinese and subsequent generations had grave doubts about the success of Americanization. Therein begins the bi-cultural complexity of the marginal man. For many, the foremost concern was the question: Where does our future lie? In America or in China? The majority seemed to favor China.<sup>21</sup> With the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, more pressure was put on the Chinese-American to look toward China. Chinese-Americans were encouraged to take up aviation in the United States to begin China's Air Force.<sup>22</sup> There was, however, a language difficulty, as most American-born were not fluent in Chinese. While the majority of opinions favored a future in China, there was little evidence that many Chinese-Americans went to China to seek their careers.

Unknown to the Chinese, the rise of the Republic of China was the beginning of a new tide. Awakened China began to build a stronger nation. Japan, too, if she were to be a power in Asia, must begin to expand. Since the opening of her door on July 3, 1853, by Commodore Perry, Japan had emerged a westernized nation ready to challenge the United States in Asia by the end of the nineteenth century.

The rise of Japan threatened her relations with the United States, which had already been strained over the treatment of the Japanese in America. The Japanese in the United States by the twentieth century had dominated positions in the fields of agriculture and fisheries. The Japanese controlled and owned land. In California in 1920 they owned 45,056 acres of agricultural acreage, controlled 80% to 90% of the vegetable and berry products, and 80% of the tomato crop.<sup>23</sup> Fishing activities on the Pacific

Coast brought suspicion that they were spies and therefore constituted a menace to national security. Anti-Oriental legislation in the twentieth century was mainly directed against them, but it also affected the Chinese. Now that Chinese labor competition was restrained and immigration under control, the Chinese were looked upon somewhat more favorably. The Chinese were seen as not ambitious in a worldly way: they did not own land, they were loyal to their employers. But the Japanese were directly opposite: they owned land; they were competitive; they went into business for themselves.

During World War II, the Chinese-Americans were in a still more favorable position as China was now allied against a common enemy. With the manpower shortage, Chinese-Americans were accepted in war industries, and private industries also lowered their barriers.

A timely visit to the United States by Madame Chiang Kai Shek propelled the image of the Chinese to a new height. Never had the spirit and morale of the Chinese in America been so high, as front page after front page carried the news of China's first lady across the nation. She possessed all the qualifications acceptable to Americans. She spoke English flawlessly, she was educated in one of our colleges, and above all, she was a Christian. Common efforts in fund drives for the war effort, Red Cross, war bond drives, and blood bank drives, brought the Chinese community into contact with the mainstream. The dominant society had become the "host" society.

Incongruous with this new found camaraderie was the embarrassing issue of the Chinese exclusion acts. Now was a time to repeal the exclusion acts to cement ties. Many super-patriotic organizations, such as the Blue Star Mothers, Daughters of the American Revolution, Native Sons of the Golden West, the A.F. of L., and V.F.W. were still anti-Chinese but their reactions were neutralized by a carefully planned campaign.<sup>24</sup> So in 1943, the exclusion laws were repealed through the passage of the Magnuson Bill. A token quota of 105 was allotted for Chinese citizenships. Yet this was the beginning of a new and amicable immigration policy toward the Chinese.

In the years following, the Chinese in America began to see a glitter in the Golden Mountain. Opportunities continued to open as Chinese were accepted in governmental agencies, in private industries, and in institutions. There was a major exodus from the confines of Chinatown, in spite of restrictive real estate covenants. A group of middle class Chinese emerged. With greater contact with the mainstream, the mutation of their cultural heritage became apparent in their children. Third, fourth, and fifth generations, reared outside of the ghettos of native-born parents, had become American in culture and Chinese in facade only.

Those who remained in the ghettos were of the older generation: the

sojourners, the senior citizens, the merchants whose life style had always centered about Chinatown. The traditional organizations which dominated the community hung on tenaciously to status and power and continued to venerate old world values. They maintained their isolation by choice. In their isolation they have not kept pace with present day social forces.

Inwardly, San Francisco's Chinatown remained a ghetto with the typical problems of all ghettos. Outwardly, she presented her best face. The activities of the communities consisted in the earning and promoting of good-will toward the dominant society. A colorful and picturesque Chinatown dazzled the tourist with festivals and enticed him with Chinese cuisine. Every spring the Golden Dragon reared its head to attract thousands, as did the activities imitating those of the dominant society with its own beauty pageants and "queen" contests. The clan associations, under the ruling and governing leadership known as the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Associations, now drew admiration for providing leadership. To the outside world every Chinese belonged to a closely knit family of hundreds or even thousands that actively worked in its own behalf as protector, benefactor and, if necessary, as provider. Chinatown had gained an air of respectability.

National coverage brought to the attention of the nation that the Chinese were . . . "one of the only racial minorities who forged ahead without assistance from any governmental or public agency." It suggested that a study of the adversity and prejudice overcome by the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans be made known to permit adoption of some of the methods used by this minority group in achieving its unique success. The Chinese were only too eager to assume and perpetuate this new role of success.

The relaxing of immigration laws in the 50's and 60's permitted the growth of more normal families with an increase of native-born children. Added to this population was an increase in immigration in 1962 when the Hong Kong Refugee Act was passed. Major communities, such as San Francisco and New York, were natural centers of gravitation. Population increase brought on a critical housing shortage. Squalid conditions added to health and sanitation problems. Language barriers often prevented employment. The problems of old Chinatown were now regenerated.

In San Francisco a sleeping Chinatown was rudely awakened when a local newspaper ran a series calling attention to the "other face of Chinatown." The establishment responded by pointing out past achievements of Chinatown.<sup>25</sup>

The Civil Rights movement of the 1960's, emanating from the black ghettos, gave inspiration to the younger members of the Chinese communities. In San Francisco, leadership came from those who were more recent

arrivals and therefore less inhibited by the power and dominance of the establishment. Together they joined forces with a few social workers of the community to challenge the traditional authorities of Chinatown. Adopting militant tactics, they shook the foundation of Chinatown out of its complacency. Thus has the dirty laundry of Chinatown been dragged out and aired in public.

The issues initially focused on grievances of youths. The scope broadened to encompass the social ills of Chinatown. On August 17, 1968, demonstrators marched through Chinatown with placards and slogans protesting the intolerable social conditions of Chinatown. From the problems in the community came an awareness of rights to better education and employment.

At a recent Board of Education meeting at a local high school in San Francisco, youth organizations, associations of teachers, and social workers participated together. A parade of speakers presented the board with programs in the interest of the community. Conspicuously absent was the traditional voice of Chinatown.

After almost a century of degradation, the Chinese were only too glad to accept their new role as a model of success. The current civil rights movement, however, has brought about an awareness of the shortcomings of American democracy in practice. Many of the younger Chinese are following the trend of the revolutionary 60's toward social reform.

#### NOTES

1. Will and Ariel Durant, *The Lessons of History* (New York, 1968), 11-12.
2. Walton Bean, *California An Interpretive History* (New York, 1968). Dr. Stanford Lyman, "Neglected Matters in Chinese American History," *Bulletin, Chinese Historical Society of America* (June, 1970), 2.
3. See Ta Chen, *Chinese Migrations, with Special Reference to Labor Conditions* (Taipei, 1967), 5-11; T. W. Chinn, H. M. Lai, P. P. Choy, *A History of Chinese in California, A Syllabus* (San Francisco, 1969), 11-13.
4. For banditry and secret society activities and local feuds in particular to Kwangtung Province, see: Kung-Chuan Hsiao, *Rural China* (Seattle, 1967), 423-426; and T. W. Chinn, et al., *Chinese in California*, 11-12.
5. See Persia Crawford Campbell, *Chinese Coolie Emigration* (London, 1923), xviii.
6. Paul Taylor, "Foundation of California Rural Society," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XXIV (September, 1945), 194.
7. See *Journal of 3rd Session, Legislature State of California* (April 23, 1852) 373.
8. See Creighton Steward Miller, *The Unwelcome Immigrant* (Berkeley, 1969) 16-80.
9. H H Bancroft, *Retrospection* (New York, 1912), 346-348

10. The larger contractors were white firms such as Sisson, Wallace & Co., The Pacific Chinese Employment Co., King & Merritt Proprietors.
11. For a detailed account on state and local laws from 1852 to 1867 see: Lucile Eaves, *A History of California Labor Legislation* (Berkeley, 1910), 105-124.
12. The relationship between labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement is discussed by Ira B. Cross, *A History of Labor Movement in California* (Berkeley, 1935).
13. For a detailed account of The Joint Congressional Committee of Investigation and the State Constitution of 1879 see: Elmer Clarence Sandmeyer, *The Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Urbana, Illinois, 1939) 57-77, 82-91.
14. According to Elmer C. Sandmeyer, riots began in Rock Springs, Wyoming, and shortly afterward the West Coast was inflamed simultaneously in Tacoma, Seattle, etc.
15. The term "traditional organizations" refers to the Chinese Six Companies, clan (known as family), and district associations and secret societies commonly known as highbinders or erroneously as tongs.
16. The number of native born in 1870 was 517; in 1880 was 1183; in 1890 was 2930; in 1900 was 9010.
17. Y. C. Hong, *A Brief History of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance*, Grand Lodge Chinese American Citizens Alliance (November, 1955) 1.
18. *26th Biennial National Convention*, Chinese American Citizens Alliance (San Francisco, 1961), 9.
19. However, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis by James William Moran, "The Chinese Revolution of 1911 as affected by the Chinese in America and American Public Opinion" (University of Colorado, 1949), covers this phase of history academically, in spite of using Carl Glick's *Double Ten* as one of its sources. Records of actual parade reports are included.
20. Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Resident Orientals on the American Pacific Coast* (Chicago, 1928), 198-201. Occupational prejudices are described by officials of seven far western colleges in reports.
21. The discussion of "Does My Future Lie in China or America" as the result of an essay contest reveals the thoughts of the second generation. This is found in the *Chinese Digest*, July 3, 1936, 5; June 12, 1936, 5; June 5, 1936, 5. Relating to the dim view of success see: "A Speech on Second-Generation Chinese in U.S.A.," *Chinese Digest* (August 7, 1936) 6, 14.
22. See *San Francisco Chronicle*, August 23, 1914, 5; May 5, 1917, 38; May, 7, 1917, 2.
23. *California and the Oriental* (Sacramento, 1920) 7, 8.
24. Fred Riggs, *Pressures on Congress* (New York, 1950), 42-91.
25. Jane E. Conant, "The Other Face of Chinatown; Poor Nutrition, Crowding cited," *San Francisco Examiner*, August 14, 1967 and August 15, 1967.

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## The Lord and the Drayman: James Bryce vs. Denis Kearney

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*Historian Alexander Saxton has called the anti-Chinese movement in California organized labor's "indispensable enemy." Protection against the economic competition of Chinese immigrants, combined with racial prejudice, helped convince California's white workers of the need for labor and political organization. A prime example was Denis Kearney's Workingmen's Party, which gained control of San Francisco government in the late 1870's. British traveler and scholar Lord James Bryce was one of the most perceptive contemporary observers of "Kearneyism." Russell Posner analyses the attitudes of both Kearney and Bryce through a study of the correspondence which passed between the two men.*

IN 1888 LORD JAMES BRYCE, the distinguished British scholar and statesman, published his classic work on government and society in the United States, *The American Commonwealth*. The second volume contained a chapter titled "Kearneyism in California," a highly critical account of Denis Kearney and the Workingmen's Party movement of 1877-79. Kearney sent Bryce a blistering rebuttal to the chapter, and in a subsequent exchange of letters moved Lord Bryce to make some modifications in later editions of his work. The letters between Bryce and Kearney are to be found in the Bryce Papers at the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

California in the middle 1870's was a place of depression and discontent. Unemployment stood at record heights, while at the same time a tide of Chinese immigration was entering the state. In better days the competition of Chinese for low-paying jobs in mining, agriculture, and industry had caused some complaint, but now white Californians found stronger reasons for their racial and cultural hostility. In San Francisco some 20% of the population was Oriental, and as early as 1872 almost half of the factory jobs in the city were held by Chinese. Unemployed white workers looked upon the Chinese as economic enemies. In particular, working-class Irish-Americans (who also amounted to about 20% of the population of San Francisco) found reason to combine their anti-Chinese prejudice with complaints about political corruption and business monopolies in the state. Many un-



employed or threatened workers felt the only remedy for political and social ills to lie in a workers' party.

During the summer and fall of 1877, disgruntled citizens began holding meetings around the city, particularly on the "sand lots" near the uncompleted city hall. A leader soon emerged—Denis Kearney. Kearney (1847-1907) was born in Ireland, and arrived in San Francisco as the 21-year-old mate of a sailing ship. By the time of the sand lots excitement, he was owner of a small drayage business. Although he lacked formal education, he was not without some learning and he spoke with vigor as well as emotion. He denounced monopoly and political corruption, but whatever the subject he returned constantly to his slogan, "The Chinese Must Go!" He was arrested for his incendiary language, but was acquitted on the grounds that no proved violence had resulted from his words.

By October, 1877, a new political force arose, the Workingmen's Party of California. Kearney was party secretary; later he became president; finally (to the joy of political cartoonists) he assumed the title of Lieutenant General. The Workingmen's Party favored not only restriction on the Chinese, but many progressive measures ultimately adopted—the eight-hour day, state regulation of railroads and other corporations, tax reform, compulsory education, and popular election of U.S. senators. The new party soon spread to other parts of the state. Its growth coincided with a strong movement to replace the 1849 constitution with a new document. Kearney's group saw its opportunity in June, 1878, when elections were held for delegates to a constitutional convention. Workingmen's Party delegates were nominated in every district, to the dismay of conservatives of both old parties. In response to the threat of a Workingmen's convention, Democrats and Republicans joined forces in many districts to put up "non-partisan" candidates. Even so, the Workingmen carried 51 out of 152 seats. The best showing of the new party was in San Francisco, where the Workingmen won easily, seating 30 delegates.

Although they lacked a majority at the convention, the Workingmen were able, by combining with farm delegates, to make some modifications in the new constitution. Anti-Chinese regulations were inserted in the document. The legislature was authorized to protect California from "dangerous aliens"; Chinese were forbidden to work for private corporations or on public works; and curbs were placed on "coolie" labor entering the state. The new constitution also set up a commission to regulate the railroads and empowered a state board of equalization to assess land taxes more equitably.

The constitution was adopted by a narrow margin in 1879. The Workingmen's Party, its aims largely achieved, disintegrated and virtually disappeared by 1880. Returning prosperity, internal dissention, and the hostility of the two traditional parties also contributed to its demise. Kearney returned to his business interests and to obscurity.

The new constitution soon proved to be a disappointment to its working class backers. The anti-Chinese provisions were eventually overturned by the Federal courts. Judicial decisions also largely nullified the tax reforms and the railroad controls, as did the actions of corrupt members of state regulatory agencies. Effective regulation of the railroads did not take place until the election of Governor Hiram W. Johnson in 1910.

However, in 1882 Kearney's goal of Chinese exclusion was achieved. A Federal law was enacted prohibiting Chinese immigration for ten years. In 1892 the statute was renewed for another ten years and in 1902 the ban was made permanent. Not until 1943, during World War II, was the Chinese Exclusion Act finally repealed.

In telling the story of Kearneyism, Lord Bryce based his account on the local California newspapers, a personal visit to the state in 1881, and written correspondence with some Californians. Bryce castigated Kearney and his movement. He called Kearney a "contemptible demagogue" and an "ignorant man" whose speeches were "dressed up" for him by others. The author saw Kearney as a destructive person, "self-confident" and "domineering," with no real program of action beyond his immediate goals. Bryce stated that Kearney merely rode the crest of a wave and then disappeared forever, a "spent rocket."

In October, 1889, Bryce returned to England from a journey abroad. He found waiting for him a long letter from Denis Kearney in San Francisco. In the letter, written three months previously on July 22, Kearney declared that Bryce's account in *The American Commonwealth* "ought not to be allowed to go uncontradicted." He said: "I was in the habit of reading enough lies in the daily Papers every day without being called upon to turn over the pages of history and find them full of falsehoods." Kearney claimed that he was entitled to a hearing. He was furious at being called a "contemptible demagogue." The agitator objected particularly to Bryce's statement: "When I was in San Francisco in the fall of 1881, people talked of Kearney as a spent rocket. Some did not know whether he was in the city. Others said that the Capitalists had rendered him harmless by the gift of a new dray and team. It seemed certain that he had become the owner of his house." Kearney claimed that these remarks were "stale slanders" circulated by his enemies for years. "I was the owner of a fine house many years before I began to agitate. The Capitalists did not furnish me with a new dray or anything else, but they did furnish you with a good many lies about me which you accepted as gospel truth."

Kearney expressed anger that Bryce had not tried to meet him during his visit to San Francisco. "If you wanted, you could easily have found me as nearly everybody in San Francisco knows where I live." The drayman ended by saying: "You were prejudiced in advance and you carried your

prejudices into your book. . . . Am I not justified in saying that I know history to be a lie and that you helped to write it?"

Bryce answered his correspondent in a mild tone. He wrote Kearney on October 26: "You express yourself with some warmth, but it is natural that warmth should arise where personal questions are concerned." The author claimed to have taken the utmost pains to acquire trustworthy information which he had revised and corrected by "a gentleman thoroughly conversant with California affairs, and whose impartiality I could rely on." (This gentleman, judging from the Bryce Papers, was Bernard Moses, who thought the Kearney movement was fundamentally harmless but stupid, and said of its collapse: "When a cause is worn out by foolish talk, it is gone forever.")

In his letter, Bryce stated that he was unprejudiced and had no intention to misrepresent the acts and words of Kearney. The British author invited Kearney to send him corrections on particular points in the book. "I shall be willing to modify (in the new edition I am about to publish) any passages which you can prove to me to be inaccurate." If Bryce was not convinced that a particular passage required alteration, he was ready to add a footnote that Kearney denied or contested the statement.

The conciliatory tone of Bryce's letter may have been dictated by two factors. One was an innate sense of fair play. After all, Bryce had neither interviewed Kearney personally nor had he corresponded with him before writing the California chapter. The author evidently felt that Kearney had the right to express his views in the controversy. A second reason was that Bryce was facing a major law suit on another chapter dealing with Tammany Hall.

In 1889, the author of *The American Commonwealth* was sued for libel by the former mayor of New York, Oakey Hall. Hall, a member of the notorious Tweed Ring, claimed damages of £10,000. A commission was set up in New York to investigate the charges. Bryce pleaded that the statements in the book were true and that the Tammany chapter contained only matters of fair comment on historical events. Twenty-three witnesses testified for Bryce. The only witness to appear for Hall was Peter B. Sweeney, a colleague in the Tweed Ring. The hearing ran to 380 pages of testimony. Bryce prepared for trial after the evidence was collected and sent to England. Hall, however, made no effort to pursue the matter further. An English judge finally ordered Hall to pay Bryce's legal costs. The former New York mayor went back to America without paying. Technically, Bryce had won. However, several years had passed in this legal activity and Bryce never recovered his expenses of over £1,000. Although it was highly unlikely that Denis Kearney would sue, Lord Bryce was probably inclined to be cautious in dealing with his California critic.

Kearney, given the opportunity for rebuttal, replied with a 20 page letter

on November 17. He wrote with pride that California had pioneered the movement to end Chinese immigration to America. "My next fight will be to get Canada to pass an anti-Chinese exclusion law." He told Bryce: "This, my dear Sir, must not be considered a voice from the tomb. I am a young man just turning 43, chockfull of vitality and a great deal of experience. While I may not be able to set the world afire, I am in hopes of living long enough to see the Asiatic hordes excluded from the Continent, from Cape Horn to Icy Cape." Kearney boasted of his sinophobia and of the effectiveness of his oratory. He claimed that in a speaking tour of the East in 1877-78, he raised the Chinese issue "from a local to a great national question."

To the charge that he was an ignorant man, Kearney replied: "True, I am not one of the literati—that is to say a professor of degrees and a master of languages—although I can speak more than one. . . . For more than 30 years, I have been a great reader and close student of men and measures. I too have circumnavigated the globe and visited many parts of the earth's surface. You ought to give me more credit for knowing a little something." Kearney denied that any reporters had written his speeches for him or "dressed them up" for publication. On the contrary, the agitator claimed that the press garbled and misinterpreted his remarks.

Kearney labeled as misleading the statement: "He was a drayman by trade." The orator stated that he had originally been a sailor and held a certificate as a master mariner. "I resigned from a steamship company . . . and purchased a teaming business so as to be with my family." Kearney also denied a charge that he was an apostate Catholic who reviled his native religion.

In his book, Bryce had said that Kearney was without "political foresight or constancy of purpose." The agitator replied: "I had the 'political foresight' to see the effects of such an organization [the Workingmen's Party] intelligently, unselfishly, and honestly lead [sic], and the 'constancy of purpose' to keep it up until I accomplished what I wanted, viz—the putting of a stop to Chinese immigration."

Kearney contradicted the statement that he had not made the Workingmen's movement but had merely rode on its crest. He claimed to have been the driving force behind the movement. Kearney said that he attended as many as five meetings a night during the organization of the new party. Whenever spirits were flagging, he returned to the clubs that he had founded to stir them anew with his oratory.

Kearney said that the sand lot meetings were a necessity because the San Francisco authorities would not grant him permission to use regular public halls. He claimed that these sand lot gatherings raised from \$500 to \$1,000 each time they met, contradicting Bryce's remark that only "vagabonds" listened to Kearney at first. The orator denied that he ever told a crowd of

followers that torches should be applied to the mansions of the railroad magnates on Nob Hill. On the contrary, police shorthand reporters who took down his speeches could find no such statement. Kearney told Bryce that he was against strikes and political riots. Success could come to the working class movement only through the ballot box and political organization.

Bryce said in *The American Commonwealth* that Kearney's delegates at the state constitutional convention were ignorant men, "without experience or constructive ideas." This Kearney denied. He said that his delegation included intelligent farmers, mechanics, merchants, and lawyers. According to Kearney, the Workingmen's group played an important part in the formulation of the new constitution. The agitator also disagreed with a statement that he had played a minor role in the campaign to adopt the 1879 constitution. Kearney claimed to have delivered 130 speeches in support of the new document. "I doubt very much Mr. Bryce if you, with all your knowledge and learning, could have worked up a new speech every day and kept it up for weeks. I had to stand the brunt of battle and came very near being assassinated for my pains."

To the point that the Workingmen's movement "fell as quickly as it rose," Kearney retorted: "It stopped when I stopped. That was after accomplishing what we desired." To the charge that he had played no part in California politics since 1880, Kearney replied that the Chinese question was being solved and that the people had been shown their immense power and how it could be used. "The plains of the state were strewn with the festering carcasses of public robbers." So Kearney quit politics, he said, because of success, not failure. The drayman also had to return to work to provide a livelihood for his poor family. He denied any interest in holding public office.

Kearney ended his long letter by saying: "I owe no one a cent. I always paid one hundred cents on the dollar. . . . I never received a dollar from public service or private parties for my services. . . . I leave it in your hands to do justice."

Bryce was as good as his word. Parts of Kearney's letter were included in an appendix to volume II in the 2nd edition. Although remaining quite critical, Bryce made a number of textual changes that softened the attack on Kearney. Four examples will suffice. "He was a drayman by trade, Irish by birth, brought up a Roman Catholic, but accustomed to include his religion among the established institutions he reviled" became: "He was Irish by birth, and though in business a drayman, had some experience as a sailor, and held a masters certificate." Also, "The orator was an ignorant man with no ideas beyond those he gathered from the daily press" was changed to: "The orator was an imperfectly educated man with ideas chiefly gathered from the daily press." Again, "Kearney had no plans be-

yond keeping the party going, but he was self-confident, domineering, and not without practical shrewdness" was transformed into: "Kearney was not without shrewdness and address." Lastly, "The demagogue himself was contemptible" became "The demagogue himself was not formidable." The author apparently communicated these changes to Kearney in a letter now missing from the Bryce Papers.

The correspondence between Kearney and Bryce ended with a pleasant message from Kearney on January 11, 1890. The drayman said: "I am very pleased at what you have done and am well satisfied that you meant to write impartially. . . . Your actions have convinced myself and my friends that you are a fair man." Kearney closed by noting that Bryce was also Irish by birth. "I am always proud of the children of that unhappy and unfortunate island who hew their way through life and leave a footprint on the sands of time. . . . Many thanks for your very courteous letter and the fairness shown by giving your readers my statement."

In his later editions, Lord Bryce added a paragraph at the end of his California chapter that was eminently fair to Denis Kearney. With mature judgment Bryce summed up the importance of the Workingmen's Party in a broader historical perspective. He wrote: "The movement which gave birth to the new constitution was a legitimate political movement. It was crude in its aims and tainted with demagogery in its methods. But it was evoked by real evils and it sought however ignorantly the public good. Kearney had no sordid personal aim to serve and gained for himself nothing more solid than notoriety. His agitation was essentially the same as that which has appeared in the Western states under the forms of Grangeism, the Farmers Alliance, and Populism."

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The letters between James Bryce and Denis Kearney are contained in the Bryce Papers in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (U.S.A. vol 25, folios 132-158). Correspondence with Bernard Moses is found in the same volume, while volume 24 has material on the Tammany law suit. The comparison between the texts on "Kearneyism in California" is taken from volume II of Bryce's *The American Commonwealth* (1st edition, 1888, and 3rd edition, 1913). A recent study of Bryce's extensive travels in the United States and his general writings about America is Edmund Ions, *James Bryce and American Democracy, 1870-1922* (1970). There is a brief, amusing chapter on Kearney in Richard Dillon, *Humbugs and Heroes* (1970). The Workingmen's Party is dealt with in Ralph Kauer's article, "The Workingmen's Party of California," *Pacific Historical Review*, XIII (September, 1944), 278-291. There is also a contemporary account of the movement by Henry George, "The Kearney Agitation in California," *Popular Science Monthly*, XVII (August, 1880), 433-453.

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*Historical Review*, XXV (September, 1938), 181-196, and Henryk Sienkiewicz, "The Chinese in California," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXIV (December, 1955), 301-316. See also Alexander P. Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy* (Berkeley, 1967).

# "THE CHINESE MUST GO!"

by ROGER OLMSTED



**T**HE SLOGAN that the rabble-rousing labor leader Denis Kearney used to such dramatic effect in the San Francisco of the late 1870's commands our attention as perhaps the only catch phrase in American history that ever "solved" a major race problem. For not long after a great many Chinese did go, with the result that those remaining constituted an increasingly small minority in the growing state of California.

What was "the Chinese Problem"? In 1876, the year before Denis started howling "The Chinese Must Go!" at sand lot meetings of San Francisco workingmen, the Chinese Six Companies estimated the oriental population of California at 148,600. As the total population of the state was perhaps 750,000, and as most of the Chinese were working age males, a very high proportion of the labor force was oriental. If the Six Companies estimate was close to correct, there were about as many Chinese as there were voters in the 1876 elections. In San Francisco, with its high concentration of Chinese, it is possible that the ratio



To make seed Havanas  
By covert addition  
Of dry cabbage leaves  
Is the Coolie's ambition.

of unskilled and semi-skilled white workers to Chinese was approaching one-to-one.

While there was good enough reason for white workingmen in the 1870's to fear the competition of cheap labor, anti-Chinese agitation and legislation had appeared in the gold rush years as an expression of a general antipathy to foreigners so presumptuous as to dig up the gold that God had buried for good Americans. With the decline of gold production after 1853, antagonism toward modestly successful Chinese miners sharpened. In 1855 the legislature attempted to prevent any "Mongolian" from entering the state; in 1862 the first anti-coolie club was formed, and Governor Stanford (soon to become a celebrated coolie importer) said,

"The presence among us of numbers of degraded and distinct people must exercise a deleterious influence upon the superior race. . . ." By the middle '60's anti-Chinese feeling deepened: California refused to ratify the Fifteenth Amendment, and San Francisco trade unionists, powerful and well organized in the immediate post-Civil War years, marched in anti-coolie demonstrations.

Legislation in Sacramento and San Francisco and mass murder in Los Angeles got the anti-Chinese '70's underway. Lynching never caught on, but legislation proved a perennial sport. For instance, a San Francisco ordinance of 1873 took an imaginative poke at Chinese laundrymen by taxing laundries as follows: 1) \$2.00 quarterly for laundries employing one horse-drawn vehicle; 2) \$4.00 quarterly for laundries employing two or more vehicles; 3) \$15.00 quarterly for laundries employing *no* vehicles.

Unconstitutional laws and ordinances failed to slow Chinese immigration, and the serious depression of 1877 put the poorer classes out of humor with legal hanky-panky. Without "coolie" competition, the workingmen of California would have been in a bad enough way in the late '70's. What Henry George had told Californians that the railroad would bring, the railroad had brought—oversupply of labor, cut-rate competition from Eastern manufacturers, and



And these are the weeds  
That our exquisites smoke.  
"White Labor Cigars"—  
'Tis a very good joke.

depression. The Chinese added a problem which would not be solved by economic theory, strikes, or troops, for the Chinese worker would live on wages smaller than those an American thought necessary for bare subsistence. And more Chinese came every month.

"The Chinese Must Go!" was a demand that everyone could understand, and that was relevant (though not central) to the economic crisis at hand. Thus it was that poor John Chinaman was responsible for the organization of the Workingmen's Party of California, for raising an Irish demagogue who threw a fright in solid folk as far away as

Boston, for forcing the Republican and Democratic parties in California to club together for mutual protection against the threat of socialism, and for agitating national politics for a decade.

The position of the thoughtful political journalist was very awkward—as the inconsistent tone of *The San Francisco Illustrated Wasp* cartoons indicates. The savage drawings of the gifted Frederick Keller vacillated between attacks on the Chinese as a real threat to the economic position of white labor and swipes at simple minded racism. While *The Wasp* supported Chinese exclusion and was at the outset sympathetic to the workingmen's movement, it impartially attacked hypocrisy and blind xenophobia. In Denis Kearney it found a choice target for satire: the Irish drayman had affected a military title in the Workingmen's Party, and from that time he was portrayed as an ass in a lieutenant-general's uniform.

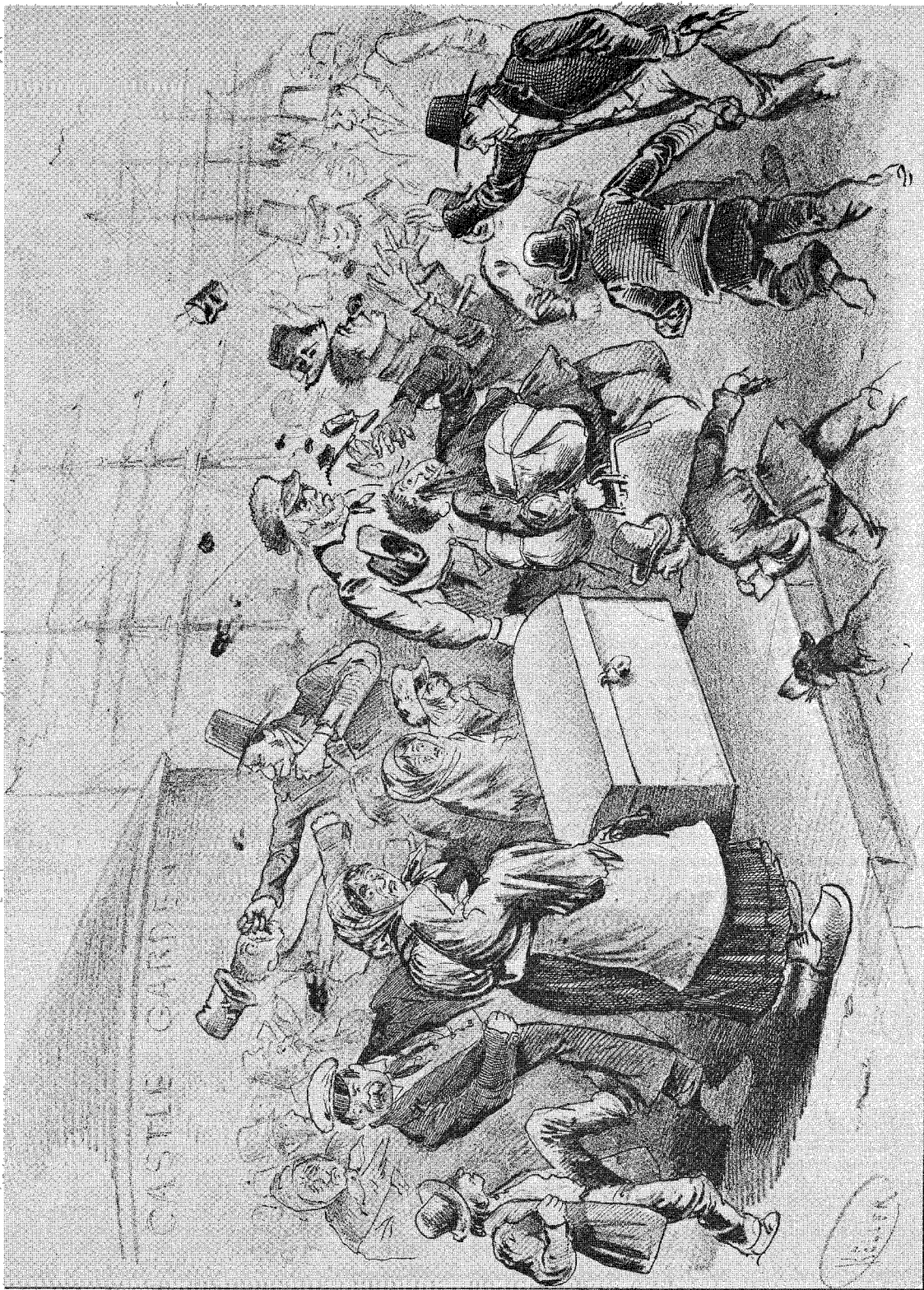
"General" Kearney hardly deserves the entire credit or blame for the restriction of Chinese immigration beginning in 1882, though he will always be associated with his favorite and famous slogan. Curiously, for all the fiery and threatening rhetoric, it was not in San Francisco but in such backwoods communities as Tacoma that there was violent mob action against the Chinese. In general, the Chinese (unlike Indians or blacks) were fortunate in having a home to go to; great numbers had always intended to return to China with their savings, and with the restriction of further immigration the Chinese colony gradually decreased in absolute numbers and rapidly decreased in relative size.





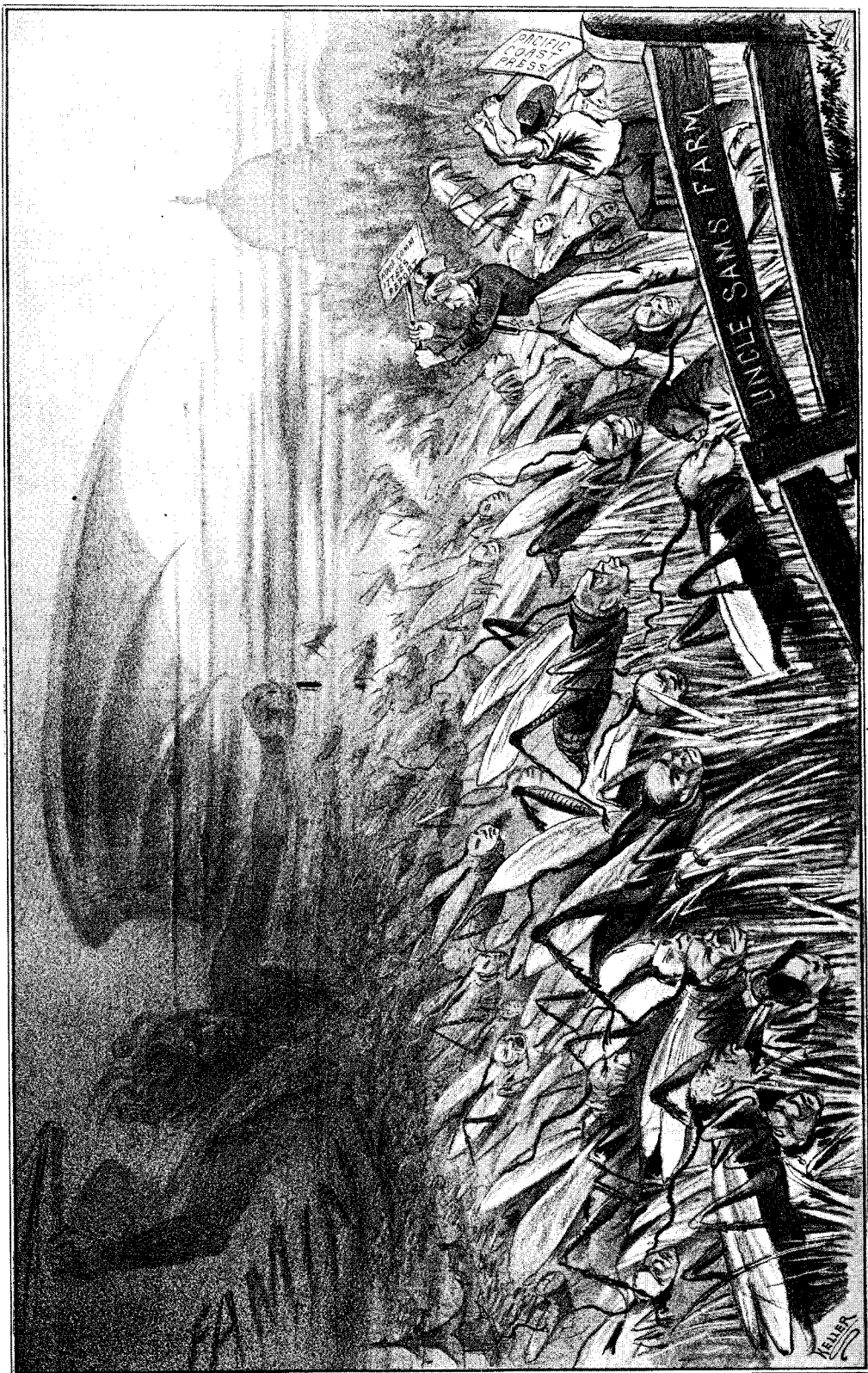
RECEPTION OF ASIATIC EMIGRANTS IN THE PRESENT TIME.





RECEPTION OF EUROPEAN EMIGRANTS TWENTY YEARS AGO.





UNCLE SAM'S FARM IN DANGER.

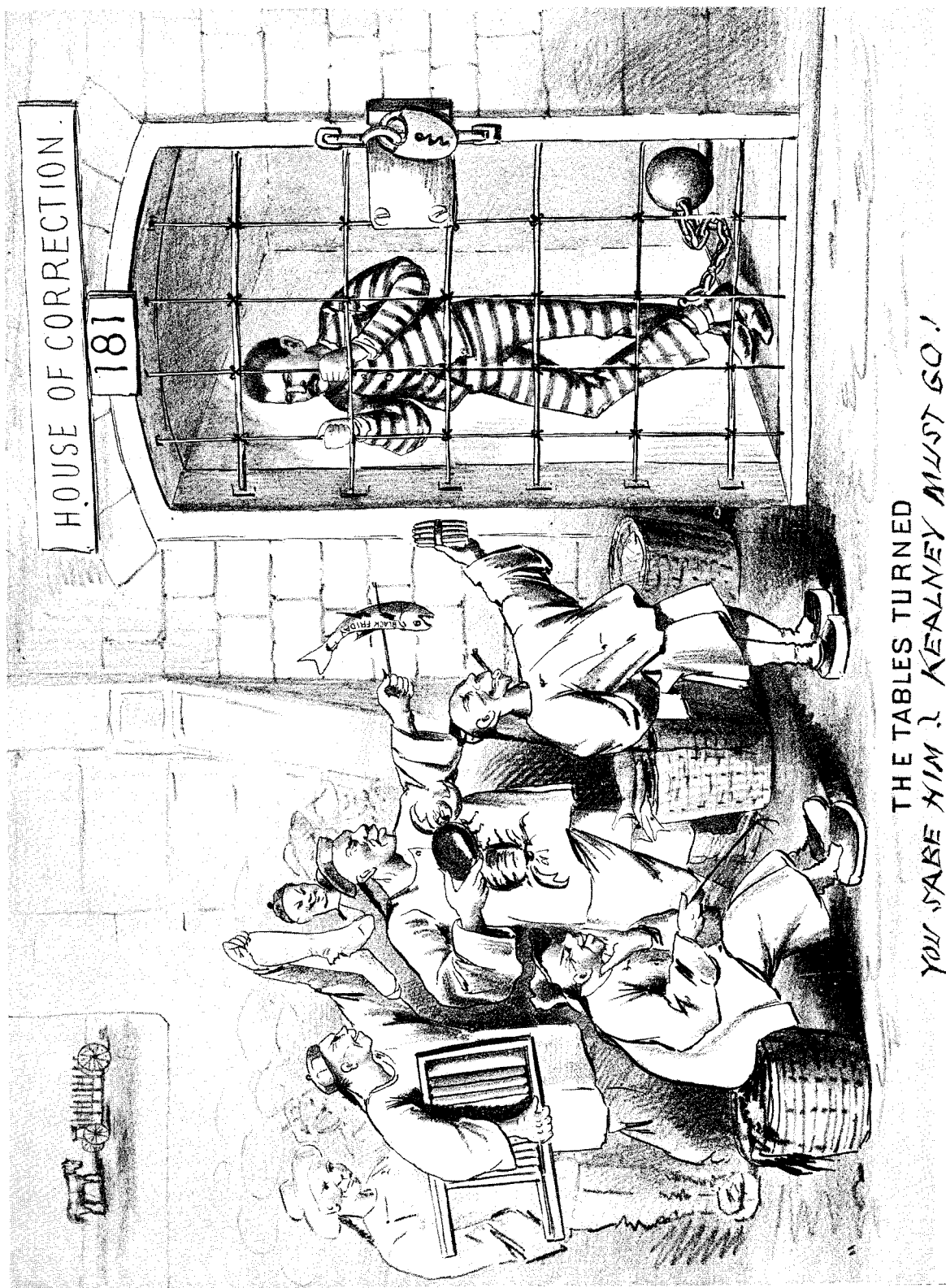
SEVENTY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE ARE STARVING IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCES OF CHINA. ALL WHO CAN DO SO ARE MAKING PREPARATIONS TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES. LOOK OUT FOR THE GRASSHOPPERS, UNCLE SAM!





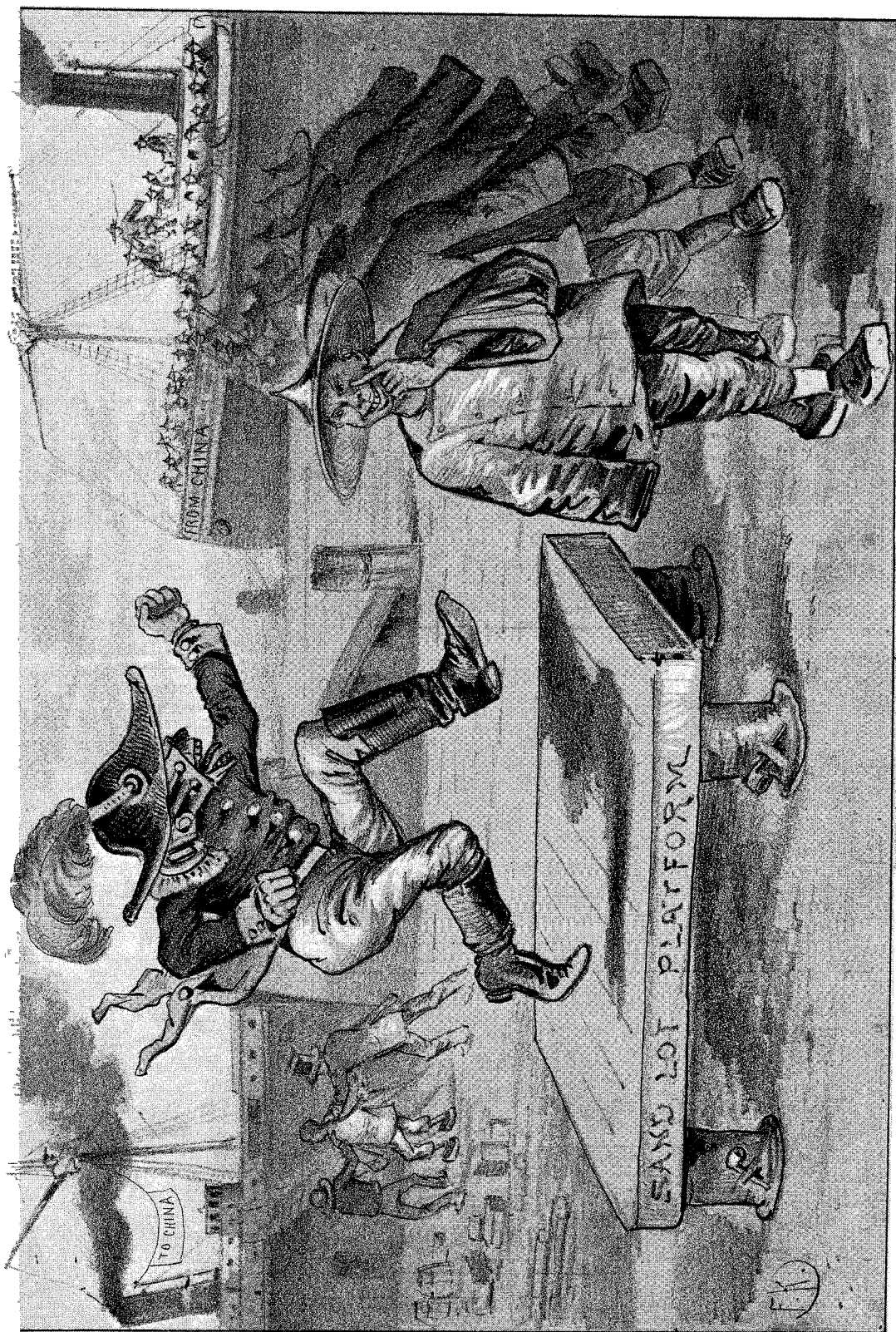
CIGAR MAKING IN CHINATOWN, SAN FRANCISCO.





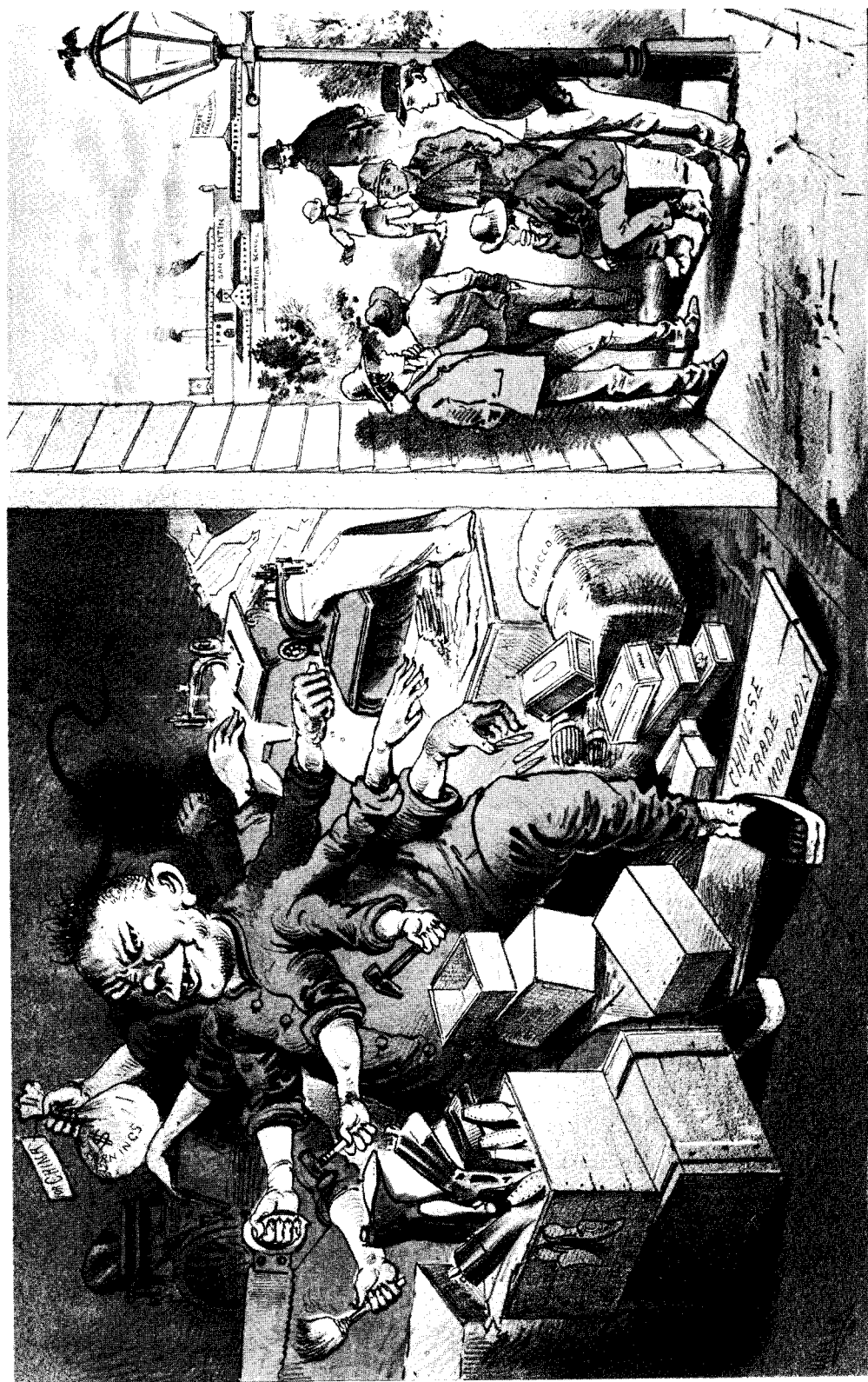
THE TABLES TURNED  
YOU JABE HIM & KEALNEY MUST GO!





*"Chineemusgo"*





"WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR BOYS?"

Cartoons from the collections of CHS, Bancroft Library,  
Oakland Museum (History Division), and John Howell Books.

David Brudnoy

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## Race and the San Francisco School Board Incident: Contemporary Evaluations

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*In July of 1971, Federal Judge Stanley Weigel ordered the San Francisco School Board to effect a massive school integration plan. In making his decision, Judge Weigel was dealing with a phenomenon which has a long history in San Francisco and California as a whole. In 1870 the state legislature provided for the establishment of separate schools for non-white children, a provision not formally removed from the books until 1946. In 1905 the San Francisco School Board took advantage of this law to order Asian children to attend a separate, all-Asian school. David Brudnoy discusses the implications of the School Board's order and the national and international reactions it provoked.*

CONCERN AS TO THE CONSEQUENCES which could result from the San Francisco school board's decision to establish separate schools for Oriental pupils in 1905 was expressed by many people on both sides of the Pacific, as well as by observers in Europe. A representative of the Japanese-American press appraised the situation in its early stages as "no longer confined to a handful of school children; it has assumed international proportions."<sup>1</sup> A Southern congressman phrased his foreboding in black-white terms:

If the President should fail to have his way . . . and California officials should stand firm in defense of the unquestioned right of that State, the danger of a permanent estrangement between our country and Japan will have been increased, first, by reason of the blunder of the President in boosting the Japanese into the belief that they were being unfairly treated and, secondly, by reason of the failure of the President in this pending conference itself.

Whereas if, upon the other hand, the President should succeed in including the officials of California to recede from their position we will become the laughing stock in the face of the whole civilized world. Such a position will come home to grieve us, not only in Cuba, but in every State North and South . . . Indeed, the negro [sic] children and the Chinese children here at home in every State will vehemently demand the same right to send their children to the same schools that the white children attend, and we will have no good reason left for refusing these demands.<sup>2</sup>



The cauldron of diplomatic tension which was set boiling by the school board affair continued to simmer even after the incident itself was ostensibly cooled. Writing to Secretary of State Elihu Root in July of 1907, Theodore Roosevelt declared: "I am more concerned over the Japanese situation than almost any other. Thank Heaven we have the navy in good shape."<sup>3</sup> Relations between Japan and America, which had begun with such high hopes in the mid-nineteenth century, took a dismal turn. The Treaty of 1854, arranged by Commodore Perry and the Tairo Ii Naosuke, read in part:

There shall be a perfect, permanent, and universal peace and a sincere and cordial amity between the United States of America . . . and the Empire of Japan, . . . and between their people respectively, without exception of persons and places.

And the revised treaty of 22 November 1894—in force in 1906—specified:

Article I: . . . The citizens or subjects of each High Contracting Power shall . . . in all . . . matters connected with the administration of justice . . . enjoy all the rights and privileges enjoyed by native citizens or subjects. . . .<sup>4</sup>

But a clause in a California state law read:

. . . trustees shall have power to exclude children of filthy and vicious habits, or children suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and also to establish separate schools for Indian children and for children of Mongolian or Chinese descent. When such separate schools are established, [such] children must not be admitted into any other school.<sup>5</sup>

Availing themselves of the opportunity thus presented, the San Francisco school board in May, 1905, issued a resolution declaring its intention to establish separate schools for Chinese and Japanese pupils, "not only for the purpose of relieving the congestion at present prevailing in our schools, but also for the higher end that our children should not be placed in any position where their youthful impressions may be affected by association with pupils of the Mongolian race."<sup>6</sup> Though the school board was urged to carry out its segregation policy by the newly-formed Japanese and Korean Exclusion League, for some reason it did not do so at that time. The active campaign against the Japanese which began in a series of articles in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in February, 1905, came to fruition in violence at the time of the earthquake of April 18, 1906, and in the next year.<sup>7</sup> Though sporadic, attacks on Japanese grew more frequent and damage was extensive. But the Japanese, realizing the circumstances under which the city was struggling, remained patient. Businesses were wrecked, and persons, including a prominent seismography expert from Tokyo, Dr. T. Omori, were stoned by ruffians.<sup>8</sup>

On October 11, 1906, the San Francisco school board passed a second resolution and moved immediately to implement it:

Resolved, that in accordance with Article X, section 1662, of the school law of California, principals are hereby directed to send all Chinese, Japanese or Korean children to the Oriental public school [located near the earthquake-devastated Chinatown] on and after Monday, October 15, 1906.<sup>9</sup>

The Japanese press was greatly disturbed by this. One of the most jingoistic of the Tokyo dailies, *Mainichi*, stated on October 21 in an agitated tone that Japan should send her navy to chastise the Americans. Theodore Roosevelt went into a rage, moved to sue the Board of Education, threatened to send in troops and directed Secretary Root to cable the American ambassador in Tokyo to give assurances to Japan. The President told Congress on December 3: "... [the anti Japanese hostility] is most discreditable to us as a people and may be fraught with the gravest consequences to the nation. . . . To shut them out from the public schools is a wicked absurdity." And he recommended passage of an act providing for naturalization of the Japanese. As is well known, however, Roosevelt favored exclusion as sound and proper policy, decrying only the manner in which some were seeking to bring this about.<sup>10</sup>

The President was vigorously opposed for his position, the *San Francisco Courant* remarking that "no such rebuke has been leveled at an American city by an American President since Andrew Jackson's time, if then."<sup>11</sup> On December 18, Roosevelt submitted to Congress the November report of his Secretary of Commerce and Labor, Victor Metcalf, and this, too, was vigorously opposed by those who defended the school board's action. Roosevelt then "invited" the school board and Mayor Schmitz to Washington for consultations, and they did come, on February 8, 1907. On the fifteenth of February a compromise was reached whereby "the Californians got what they most wanted, assurances that the influx of coolies would be stopped; the federal administration got what it most wanted—a promised repeal of the school order. The San Francisco delegation, fully aware that a surrender on the school issue would cause a storm of protest in their city, were reluctantly brought around to Roosevelt's point of view. . . ."<sup>12</sup> The school order was rescinded on March 13, except insofar as it applied to Chinese and Korean children; the "Gentlemen's Agreement," further limiting Japanese immigration, was concluded, and the affair was officially closed.

However, soon after the delegation returned to San Francisco, mobs renewed their attacks on the Japanese.

Within two weeks after the riots, the opposition leaders in Japan were speaking openly of war, and the press of the United States and of Europe was reporting that the affair had become so serious that France had extended her good offices to pro-

mote an understanding. This last rumor appears to have been without foundation, for the diplomatic situation was in no way disquieting, but it contributed to the growing feeling that affairs were nearing a crisis.<sup>13</sup>

The next two years witnessed the world cruise of the American fleet, Roosevelt's advocacy of building up the navy, and diplomatic measures designated to ward off any possible American-Japanese conflict.<sup>14</sup> The aura of suspicion, hate and fear symbolized by the school board incident was to last, first in diminished and then in gradually heightened form, to World War II.

This study of an important incident in the worsening of Japanese-American relations is concerned with attitudes. It is not intended here to discuss in detail the chronological unfolding of events; the brief historical resumé above must suffice for that. Professor Thomas Bailey has asserted that the story is one of race prejudice and should be seen primarily in that light; the validity of his contention is tested here by reference to the relevant opinions of various individuals, publications, and organizations. I have concentrated primarily on one motivating impetus to the affair because of my belief that on the American side the injustices committed were largely the result of a particular racialist viewpoint; as the gyrating melody of diplomacy was played in the upper registers, the *basso ostinato* of racialism droned on in the lower.

In considering the affair, the early warnings of the President of the United States and the later evaluation of the situation by the President of Stanford University were kept in mind as poles between which to view the multitude of opinions. Writing to Senator Lodge on May 15 and June 5, 1905, Roosevelt said:

I am utterly disgusted. . . . The feeling of the Pacific Coast people . . . is as foolish as if conceived by the mind of a Hottentot. [With] careless insolence [they wish] grossly to insult the Japanese . . . and at the same time . . . be given advantages in Oriental markets. . . . With besotted folly [the West Coast people] are indifferent to building up the navy while provoking this formidable new power—a power jealous, sensitive and warlike and which, if irritated could at once take both the Philippines and Hawaii from us if she obtained the upper hand on the seas.<sup>15</sup>

Seven years later, Stanford University President Jordan observed the school affair in this light:

The extravagance of the press in both nations stirred up all the latent partisanship in both races involved. On the one hand the injuries to the Japanese children were grossly exaggerated. On the other hand, gratuitous slanders were invented to justify the actions of the school board.<sup>16</sup>

The bold assertion of the editor of the *Coast Seamen's Journal* must be taken seriously: "the opposition to Oriental immigration is justified upon

the single ground of race. . . . The race differences between these people is radical and irreversible. . . ."<sup>17</sup> What a majority of Americans may have felt remains subordinate in importance to the expressions of opinion by those who spoke and wrote. The "case" here presented, therefore, is an indictment of America's part in the incipient stages of the tragedy of American-Japanese hostility by those who commented on it at the time. The heavy blame which is justly levied upon the Japan of the 1930's and early 1940's for her role in the destruction of world peace is not absolved by reference to this earlier American injustice to Japanese people. Without an understanding of it and of the succession of slights which followed, however, the picture of the '30's and '40's becomes lopsided, and conclusions are bound to be distorted.<sup>18</sup>

Agitation against the Japanese proved to be a popular pastime of politicians and propagandists in California beginning about 1900. Denis Kearney had hardly put down his "The Chinese Must Go" placards when he picked up one labeled "The Japanese are the Yellow Peril," dropped, perhaps, by a disciple of the notorious Dr. O'Donnell, an abortionist who had uttered the cry "Japs Must Go" for the first (recorded) time in San Francisco in 1887. Kearney had a taste for the Apocalyptic: "I tell you solemnly that if the fathers and mothers of this country don't see it now, they will see it later on to their sorrow when it will grow to such size that it will take bloodshed to settle it."<sup>19</sup>

It seemed to many as if anti-Japanese agitation in labor-dominated San Francisco was due in large measure to the machinations of local labor-political organs.<sup>20</sup> Candidates of all major parties stood on platforms constructed of old anti-Chinese planks up-dated to draw attention to the new Japanese "menace." Mass meetings were held to protest the presence of the Japanese on all grounds imaginable. Yet, despite the capital to be gained from pandering to the anti-Japanese bias of many constituents, political profit cannot have been the chief motive occasioning the school board incident, as it was hardly exploited by politicians until criticism was drawn from "hostile" sources such as Japan, Roosevelt, the "East," and Europe.<sup>21</sup>

When the assertion was made that Japanese were entitled to attend the same schools as whites because of the 1894 treaty, the discussion of that treaty and of its subordination to, or supremacy over, local laws became a prominent issue. The matter of the legality or illegality of the school board action in light of the treaty was the vehicle whereby certain defenders of the American Way of Life declared their intention of showing the federal government the proper order of things.

The Administration's view was expressed by Elihu Root in an article in the inaugural volume of a new scholarly journal. The San Francisco board did provide schooling for Oriental children, Root asserted, but not

the same schooling as for whites and other resident aliens. The 1894 treaty did not guarantee schools to the Japanese in California, he felt, but only "equality of treatment with the citizens of other foreign nations. . . ." <sup>22</sup> Accordingly, Root reasoned, if California provided schools for alien children, it must include Japanese children too. Seeing the treaty-making power of the United States as superior to the laws of the several states, and hence viewing the San Francisco issue as one *not* involving the states rights theory, Root wrote that "it follows of necessity that the treaty-making power alone was authority to determine what those rights, privileges, and immunities shall be." <sup>23</sup> In the preceding issue of the same journal, the editors asserted that the Japanese of San Francisco had been denied proper rights and privileges under the most-favored nation concept. <sup>24</sup> The term employed, in the pages of the *American Journal of International Law* and elsewhere, was "equivalent if not identical" school facilities.

Both scholarly and popular opinion relied strongly on this doctrine, derived, of course, from the "separate but equal" ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which enshrined as the law of the land a much earlier judgment by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, Lemuel Shaw, allowing separate schools for children of different color. <sup>25</sup> Professor Amos S. Hershey not only minimized the incident, calling it a "trivial matter . . . the segregation of less than one hundred Japanese pupils in the oriental school of San Francisco," but also dismissed the notion that the Japanese were entitled to school privileges by the treaty: "Even if this were the case, it by no means follows that such a provision would be constitutional or that, if constitutional, Japanese children could not be segregated in separate schools." <sup>26</sup> Hershey differentiated the "broad constructionist" argument (that the treaty power of the federal government is *unlimited*) from the "strict constructionist" argument (that such power is *limited*), bemoaned that the broad constructionists seemed to have won in this case, and asserted his own view that the "federal government [does not have] the right, by treaty or otherwise, to encroach upon the police power or reserved rights of the States to the extent of directing or controlling their public school system." <sup>27</sup>

Hershey's view was popular with those asserting the rightness of San Francisco's course. President Altmann of the school board, for instance, flatly declared that "if there is a violation of the treaty rights between the two governments the fault is not ours; it is with the legislature that passed the law." <sup>28</sup> And such was the respondent's argument in the case of *Keikichi Aoki v. M. A. Deane*, which came before the Supreme Court of California in March, 1907. Deane was principal of the Redding primary school, from which ten year old, Japanese-born, Keikichi Aoki was barred in accordance with the city regulation, and to which the boy, through his father, Michit-sugu Aoki, sought admittance by legal action. Aoki saw the word "reside"

in the 1894 treaty as including attendance in schools. The respondent, represented by William G. Burke, City Attorney, denied this construction and, furthermore, hinted that the treaty might be "unconstitutional and nugatory" because it was in excess of the authority given to the President and was a trespass on the reserve powers of the States guaranteed by Amendment X of the United States Constitution.

Never before has any attempt been made to enforce a right of this character through treaty manipulations on behalf of foreign subjects. Efforts have been repeatedly made on the part of citizens of the United States to defeat legislation by the States establishing separate schools for persons of the colored race. Several of the States of the Union have enacted statutes and they are still now in full force and effect, establishing separate schools for negro children, and the [right to so establish such schools as has been challenged on the] ground that such legislation was in conflict with the fourteenth amendment, . . . guaranteeing to its citizens equal privileges, rights and immunities, and the equal protection of the laws.<sup>29</sup>

The halls of Congress reverberated with stirring defenses of California's bold posture. *California is a sovereign state:*

The State of California has the right to determine for itself the rules and regulations for the conduct of its schools as it has to determine any other question in the multitude of reserved rights of the States. No Court has ever decided that the General Government, either by an act of Congress or by the exercise of the treaty-making power, can invade the common school system of the States, the impulsive declaration of the President about sending the army and Navy to protect the Japanese to the contrary notwithstanding.<sup>30</sup>

*The treaty be damned:*

So I contend . . . first, that there is no conflict between the treaty and the California school law; second, that if there is a conflict, the treaty must give way, for the California school law is an exercise of the police power, and therefore superior, subject to repeal by no authority on earth save by her State legislature.<sup>31</sup>

*They all look alike:*

. . . I am for the State of California as against any race or nation, because it is an American State and part of the United States. I am with the people of California, because this Japanese question is the Chinese question with another name.<sup>32</sup>

Representative Michalek concluded his remarks by asserting that the exclusion of Japanese labor is as important as adherence to the Monroe Doctrine.

The bulk of *scholarly* opinion, however, disagreed with Hershey and the popularizers of his view. Professors Charles Hyde, William D. Lewis, Simeon E. Baldwin, and Mr. Arthur K. Kuhn, for example, writing in respected law journals, asserted the supremacy of the treaty-making powers



of the United States—the broad constructionist argument. Nevertheless, the editors of *The American Journal of International Law*, in the issue containing Secretary Root's piece, evaluated a contradictory theory as follows:

In a very careful and sane article by Theodore P. Ion, in the *Michigan Law Review* for March, 1907, it is contended on authority and reason that the treaty does not confer the right of education in the public schools; that the state of California performs its international duty, supposing the Japanese have the right claimed, by furnishing equal, not identical, facilities; that foreigners cannot well claim to enjoy in this country greater rights and privileges than native-born citizens of the United States enjoy, referring especially to the situation of the negro.<sup>33</sup>

At the base of the ruling against the Japanese children there was a feeling that Japanese could not be assimilated. Olaf Tveitmoe, a Swedish immigrant who was president of the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League, who had a criminal record, and who was the alter-ego of P. H. McCarthy, head of San Francisco trades-unionism, spoke of Japan as an industrial and military menace. The Japanese people themselves

do not, will not, and can not amalgamate with our people . . . they remain at heart Mongols still. The Jap never assimilates? Why should he? He belongs to a race and a civilization centuries ahead of our own. He is perfectly willing to learn anything of use from anybody who can teach him. But everything he learns and . . . acquires is for Japan. He has no attachment and no affection save for his own people and for his own land. . . . In sex relations, Japanese ideas and ideals are so far apart from our own that it is unjust to judge them by our standards. As to chastity, the Jap is simply unmoral.<sup>34</sup>

Most of the observers whose opinions were reported asserted (albeit in prose less purple than Tveitmoe's) that the Japanese is one type, the white another. Particularly was this so, they felt, with adults of the two races.<sup>35</sup> The *Chronicle* explained "Why Japanese are Objectionable in Schools" thus: "Whatever the status of the Japanese children while still young and uncontaminated, as they grow older they acquire the distinctive character, habits and moral standards of their race, which are abhorrent to our people. We object to them in the familiar intercourse of common school life as we would object to any other moral poison."<sup>36</sup>

It was maintained that there were countless Japanese, many of them adults, in the primary and secondary schools of San Francisco: "It is difficult to tell the age of a Japanese boy or man, and we have learned from experience that we could not take their word for it. The parents of white children—especially of girls in the adolescent period—began to feel that these men should be excluded from the public schools altogether. . . ."<sup>37</sup> Even when it was not asserted that the children were adults, it was obvious that they were unacceptable: "The people of California will never permit

children of Asiatic descent to sit at the same desk and occupy the same room with white children. The Government of the United States is powerful, but not powerful enough for that."<sup>38</sup>

This, then, was the menace, the scholar battalion of the Yellow Peril army. In fact, in the San Francisco school system, there were 93 Japanese people, one-third of them American-born (thus citizens). Sixty-five were boys, thirty-four *under* age fifteen, thirty-one *over* fifteen, of which two were over twenty and of which the average age of the remainder was seventeen and one-half years old.<sup>39</sup> (The census of 1910 listed 41,346 Japanese in California, of which 4,518 lived in San Francisco, less than two percent of the total population of that city.) Hugh Borton asserts that "since there were only 93 persons affected by this order, it had obviously been motivated by racial prejudice against the Japanese."<sup>40</sup> The late A. Whitney Griswold maintained further that "the school board seems to have acted more in response to a desire to humble the Japanese than on the merits of the case presented,"<sup>41</sup> and there were numerous assertions by teachers and principals that the Japanese were model pupils, personally clean and moral. Yet as "tens of thousands of parents in San Francisco and perhaps hundreds of thousands on the Pacific Coast, were deceived and excited by this unfair presentation of the case, the Board of Education and the San Francisco newspapers are largely responsible for the state of feeling thus brought about."<sup>42</sup>

Some soothingly reassured the nation that the incident would be amicably settled and everything would be all right. Certain observers later felt the problem to have been a matter of economic competition rather than of racial antipathy. Attacks on Japanese restaurants and other *non-union* establishments added support to former mayor James Phelan's observation, that "the racial question has been unfairly injected into the situation. There is practically no racial prejudice, but the working men have been urged not to patronize the Japanese restaurants, for instance, because they are conducted by non-union help. . . ."<sup>43</sup>

The old anti-Chinese arguments about the unreliability and mercilessness of Chinese employees were trotted out, with the added filip that the Japanese were worse even than the Chinese. California's Hayes, the Congressional champion of Japanese exclusion, spoke in Washington of the cheap labor swamping the American labor market, and of a people so heinous as to be undesirable under any circumstances:

. . . unblushing lying is so universal among the Japanese as to be one of the leading national traits; . . . the Japanese people do not understand the meaning of the word "morality," . . . there is no such word in Japanese corresponding to "sin," because there is in the ordinary Japanese mind no conception of its meaning. There is no word corresponding to the word "home," because there is nothing in the Japanese domestic life corresponding to the home as we know it.<sup>44</sup>

*The Nation's* evaluation of Hayes is noteworthy: "He indulged in this kind of claptrap in spite of the fact that the whole Pacific Coast is suffering from lack of labor. The development of all its industries is retarded for want of hands. An immediate influx of from fifty to one hundred thousand Chinese and Japanese would be a great blessing."<sup>45</sup>

I think it fair to suggest, with Professor Bailey and the correspondent for an *Outlook* article, "The Attacks on the Japanese," that the problems of economic competition and racial prejudice were inter-related, if not actually two sides of the same inflated coin.

. . . the attacks upon peaceable and law-abiding Japanese, the exclusion of Japanese pupils from the public schools attended by whites, the boycott of the Japanese restaurants last fall and the stoning of some of them this spring, are all due, directly or indirectly to a feeling of racial antipathy aroused by the trades unions for selfish economic reasons, and greatly intensified by the activity of the Japanese Exclusion League and the one-sided treatment of the question at issue by the San Francisco press.<sup>46</sup>

In 1905, the organization known as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League (later The Asiatic Exclusion League) lumbered into existence, with the above-mentioned O. E. Tveitmoe as founder and first president. Though, as has been noted, anti-Japanese sentiment preceded the founding of the organization, there can be little doubt that the League, aided by the politicians Abe Ruef and Mayor Schmitz, was in large part responsible for creating the school question, for aggravating the boycotts and perhaps for encouraging the attacks on Japanese.<sup>47</sup> The League was particularly hostile to the school board when it returned from the "sell-out" in Washington. In the midst of the imbroglio, the *World's Work* appraised the League thus: "Such a league, if it confine its activity to legitimate matters, may go far toward the simplification of this most difficult and involved question. If it plunge ahead blindly, following the dictates of race prejudice, passion, or mere jealousy, it will become a menace not only to California but to the United States itself."<sup>48</sup>

An examination of their activities evinces doubt that the League members, with their single-minded determination to rid California of its Orientals as well as of its Oriental "problem," could have served to do anything but stir up trouble. The League's pronouncements represent the whole spectrum of invective leveled against the Japanese, whether of an explicitly racial type or not. The school question, for the League and its allies, served as an initiating vehicle for launching the exclusion movement, and as such it was deliberately provocative. "The school question is a mere incident in our campaign for Japanese exclusion."<sup>49</sup>

"We ask that the Chinese Exclusion Act shall be extended to embrace Japanese and all other Asiatic laborers," said Representative Hayes in Congress.<sup>50</sup> "Californians want to be rid of the Japanese . . . Whether the put-

ting out of the way involves the US in a war with Japan or whether the thing can be done smoothly and peacefully is a matter of supreme indifference to the people of the Golden State.”<sup>51</sup> Montaville Flowers excoriated the United States for allowing Japan to see how she could get what she wanted by appeal to international sentiments, and he blamed the Japanese for provoking the affair themselves.<sup>52</sup> The Japanese were accused of imperiousness, impudence, of taking honors in school away from white children, of moral laxity (concubinage, picture brides, prostitution), and of a rich catalogue of sins. Representative Webb, ever alert to the dangers of miscegenation, disturbance of the national order, and so forth, was especially agile:

The free-school privilege of California is a gift to the Japanese which they are not compelled by any law, regulation or ordinance to accept. The only condition which the State attaches to the gift is that, if they do accept it, they must do so in certain school buildings, which are as comfortable as those in which the whites attend school. . . . It is the height of Oriental conceit to demand more. It is the climax of Japanese swell-headedness to persist in their demands. [applause] This insistence in demanding that they be allowed to attend white schools proves their unfitness to enjoy such a privilege. [applause] The sons of Nippon should be made to understand that notwithstanding their recent victory over decrepit Russia, they cannot compel the Young Giant of the West to abrogate her laws or destroy her customs simply to meet the Japanese caprice or tickle Japanese fancy. [applause]<sup>53</sup>

Outbursts of this sort and attacks against Japanese were seen by Roosevelt as cracks in the diplomatic wall “which would plunge us into war.”<sup>54</sup> That was the most serious conceivable consequence of the affair is obvious. Yet, we must recognize that in the many issues involved, the many attitudes of hostility and defensiveness expressed, the essential feature, that which stands preeminent, was racism. Professor Bailey has savored the multitude of ingredients in this particular stew:

The labor union group in California felt that they had been sold out; the exclusionists considered the agreement but a halfway measure; the anti-exclusionists regarded the settlement as a step in the wrong direction; the states rights advocates, on the Coast, as well as farther east, deplored the unprecedented extension of the federal arm; the Southern whites feared a dangerous precedent that might later be used against negro segregation . . . and the Japanese masses were disgruntled . . . because of veiled discrimination involved.<sup>55</sup>

The Western states were almost uniformly hostile to the Japanese, and within this hostility there loomed large the specter of race. Justified, perhaps, in fearing a submergence of native culture by a hypothetical, over-large influx of Asians—a scant possibility—the Californians and their supporters veered into sophistry when attempting to bring about their desired goal, exclusion of Orientals through any means possible. Though a few

Western papers stood out at least partially as defenders of the Japanese, and though various chambers of commerce, churches, missionaries, and educators deplored the hostility, many Californians, desiring to preserve the white race against the relentless competition of the Asians, indulged in gutter abuse.<sup>56</sup> Their hope was to end immigration and thus end the problem, "for the Japanese now here would die off. . . ."<sup>57</sup> With every weapon in its arsenal the "yellow press" of California and its friends sought to breathe a current of fear and loathing of the Japanese into the Western atmosphere. California's friends in Congress stood ready to defend her: "Those people in California are right in requiring the Japanese and the Chinese and the negro and other alien races to attend separate schools. That separation of the races is best for every race and for everybody."<sup>58</sup> Some shouted for war. Representative Hayes was ready to go: "If we are to have war with Japan, let's have it right away. We are ready and they are not."<sup>59</sup>

The Eastern papers stood aloof and frowned, though often with visions of lost commerce dancing in their heads:

. . . the people of the United States have occasion to be ashamed of themselves. . . . If the people of the coast are in truth engaging in any form of anti-Japanese crusade or are showing a prejudice against the Japanese, they are open to the emphatic condemnation of the whole people of this country. Our interests in the Far East, to speak commercially, are too heavy and important to be placed in jeopardy by a wanton insult of the dominant power.<sup>60</sup>

Roosevelt, the patrician Easterner, exemplifying a peculiar, though fashionable, blend of polite Social Darwinian prejudice and egalitarian republicanism, expressed displeasure both with Japan, for being too excitable, and with California—particularly with the latter. After the tensions had eased, Roosevelt, though seeing the Japanese-American crisis as the most significant in his administration, wrote calmly of the problem to Representative William Kent of California: "Our line of policy must be adopted holding ever in view the fact that this is a race question, and that race questions stand by themselves. . . ."<sup>61</sup> Roosevelt wanted exclusion of laborers by mutual agreement, and complete freedom of movement for the upper elements of both the white and Japanese peoples.

The East was almost unanimous in condemning the Californians for their methods, while approving in general their desire to prevent "coolie" immigration. The European press was also of this mind. As the reaction of all the foreign press but the Japanese is beyond the scope of this study, suffice it to say that much European comment was alarmist in its prediction of war as a result of the school controversy, while only those areas among the world's nations which shared California's problems (such as Australia and Western Canada) sided with the American Giant of the West in her approach to the problem.

Japanese observers, of course, were deeply disturbed. Press comments in the first month of the controversy, October, 1906, ran the gamut of opinion:

... the incident of the expulsion of all Japanese children from California schools has made the already full cup flow over. . . . The *Jiji Shimpō* is astounded at this action on the part of the San Francisco authorities. It has not believed such a thing possible in America, the country which, above all others, prides itself on being guided by principles of freedom and benevolence. There have been of late many evidences of the growth of anti-Japanese feeling in the United States, but the *Jiji* has been restrained from commenting on them, remembering, as it always does, what Japan owes to America and with what feelings she has always regarded her great trans-Pacific neighbor. . . . The *Kokumin Shimbun*, however, is disposed to make light of this affair . . . reminding them [the Japanese] that the centre of discussion is a vicious circle of western politicians who are governed almost entirely by the labouring class. . . . The *Asahi Shimbun* is disposed to minimize the school incident. It thinks that the objectionable step taken by the education authorities will be revoked. . . . the American population includes a very unruly element which . . . lynches prisoners, burns negroes alive and commits other shocking outrages. It is not impossible that these lawless persons should turn their hand against the Japanese inhabitants of San Francisco.<sup>62</sup>

Japan was pleased that Roosevelt seemed about to champion her. The President's friend, Baron Kaneko, called Roosevelt's December 3, 1906, speech to Congress, "the greatest utterance by an American president since Washington's farewell address." To the Japanese, Secretary Metcalf's mission to San Francisco was "convincing proof of the disinterestedness and sincerity of the Roosevelt administration."<sup>63</sup> Though the Japanese community in San Francisco expressed its indignation at the strong diet of abuses it had been fed, Japan itself was at first willing to trust to the federal government to work out a settlement. "When such amicable settlement is unattainable, then, and then only, should we talk of retaliation."<sup>64</sup> However, Japan plainly saw the racial impetus and loudly resented it: "The people of Japan, living under their gentle government, can not allow the people of San Francisco to discriminate against innocent school children on the pretext of racial differences. It is the foundation of our civilization and of our actual ability to enjoy the blest liberty of equal rights."<sup>65</sup>

In November, 1906, the Japanese press quieted temporarily, desiring not to magnify the incident or allow it to disturb friendly United States-Japanese relations. But as the racial aspect grew, the press again became disturbed. The *Kokumin Shimbun* urged Japanese to forget about San Francisco and head out to South America where chances for happiness were better. In mid-November, hopes for early settlement dimmed and the Japanese set in for a long wait.

Dean Mitsukuri of Tokyo Imperial University's College of Sciences, wrote President Jordan of Stanford in December.



The remedy against immigration of lower-class Japanese is to be sought in coming to a diplomatic understanding in the matter. The Japanese government would be open to reason. But to pass a law condemning the Japanese wholesale, for no other reason than that they are Japanese, would be striking Japan in her most sensitive point. An open declaration of war would not be resented so much. The reason is not far to seek. Japan has had a long struggle in recovering her rights as an independent state and in obtaining a standing in the civilized world. If now her old friend . . . should turn her back on her and she would no longer associate with her on even terms, the resentment must necessarily be very bitter.<sup>66</sup>

Japanese reaction grew even more bitter in 1907 as the order of the Board of Education gnawed at Japanese who came to regard the incident not so much an invasion of treaty rights, but as a breach of international comity. Politicians of the opposition Progressive Party, led by Count Okuma, took the lead in attacking United States' racial hostility, and, by inference, the impotence of the party in power in Japan. Japan's government responded by taking advantage of the incident "to create a diversion at Washington and to create popular sentiment in Japan in favor of increased military and naval appropriations,"<sup>67</sup> (as did Roosevelt here). But it is palpably unfair to imply, as did the *Seattle Call*, that Japan had fomented the situation on the West Coast, using it to its own advantage to offset claims that American trade was being unfairly treated in Manchuria.<sup>68</sup>

As the historical narrative has been briefly described above, it suffices to add that the crisis passed without leading either to war between the two nations or to armed clashes between the whites and Japanese in San Francisco, other than incidental, isolated brawls. We know now that Japan was in nowise confident of victory in a war with the United States, that she could not support it economically (having just exhausted her finances in the war with Russia), and did not want it then.

It is to be wondered if it often, or ever, occurred to the Japanese that what they protested so dramatically and with such justice when applied to themselves, was accepted by them with such equanimity when applied to the Chinese and Koreans in America. This lack of sympathy by the Japanese for other East Asians likewise discriminated against is but a single example of one minority group's willingness to regard with indifference the discrimination against other minority groups by the dominant group. Here, however, the greater wrong and the greater tragedy was that breach of faith demonstrated by so many Americans. (A lesser wrong, but one worth pondering, is that the defenders of the Japanese in America were, like Roosevelt, so often motivated in their concern by awareness of Japan's *might*, and that in the school compromise itself, the *Japanese* were thereafter allowed to attend the "white" schools, but the Koreans and Chinese

were not.) Though the possibility of hostile economic competition or the troubles which might have come out of unrestricted Japanese immigration were causes for reasoned concern, the "Yellow Peril" was a fiction. Though the Japanese "menace" in San Francisco was a figment of the yellow journalist's pen, the potential menace to international comity, and to international peace, as a result of the fears thus excited, was real. That such American nativism as was manifested in the San Francisco school affair had not resulted in even more intense international and internal difficulty, is a noteworthy, though separate, subject.

## NOTES

1. *The Japanese American* (San Francisco), October 25, 1906, quoted in Montaville Flowers, *The Japanese Conquest of American Opinion* (New York, 1917), 13.
2. Hon. George G. Gilbert of Kentucky, speech in the House of Representatives, "The Japanese School Question," February 12, 1907. An interesting variant of this sentiment was quoted in "The Japanese Protest," *Nation*, LXXXIII (November 3, 1906), 364: "For a nation of Yellow people to arrogate unto itself the methods of civilized Powers in protecting its citizens against wrongs suffered abroad is the purest insolence." *The Nation* was quoting agitators; its editorial stand decried such remarks.
3. Letter, Roosevelt to Root, July 13, 1907, in H. F. Pringle, *Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography* (New York, 1931), 407.
4. The treaty of 1854 is discussed in Sidney Gulick, *The American Japanese Problem* (New York, 1914), 32. The treaty of 1894 is analyzed in part in *The Japanese School Segregation Case, No. 4754, in the Supreme Court of the State of California, Keikichi Aoki v. M. A. Deane* (March, 1907).
5. Quoted and discussed in William Thompson, "San Francisco and the Japanese," *World Today*, XI (December, 1906), 1310.
6. John P. Young, "The Support of the Anti-Oriental Movement," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXIV (September, 1909), 236. At that time, there was *no congestion* in the schools. See Eleanor Tupper and George E. McReynolds, *Japan in American Public Opinion* (New York, 1937), 19-42, *passim*. Possibly because of the lack of urgency, or "congestion," at the time, the resolution attracted little attention, and Japanese protest of it then, if there was any, was not recorded.
7. It is ironic that the outbreak of anti-Japanese violence occurred at just the time when Japan most showed concern for San Francisco's problems. The Japanese Red Cross, for instance, had given \$244,960 for relief of the earthquake victims, a figure in excess of the aid given by other nations. However, following the earthquake, a shortage of school buildings, hence *congestion*, finally developed.
8. See Yamato Ichihashi, "Emigration from Japan and Japanese Immigration into the State of California" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1914), 281.
9. Quoted in the Metcalf Report, "Final Report on the Situation Affecting the Japanese in the City of San Francisco, California," message from the President of the United States to Congress (December 18, 1907), 3.
10. Roosevelt's speech is in J. D. Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers of the Presidents* (Washington, 1911). In his *Autobiography* (New York, 1913), 411, Roosevelt wrote of the long-time strong feeling in California against immigration

of Asiatic laborers: "I believe this to be fundamentally a sound and proper attitude, an attitude which must be insisted upon, and yet which can be insisted upon in such a manner and with such courtesy and such sense of mutual fairness and reciprocal obligation and respect as not to give any just cause of offense to Asiatic peoples."

11. Quoted in *Current Literature*, XCII (January, 1907), 7.

12. Thomas Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Japanese American Crises* (Stanford, 1934), 143.

13. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 201.

14. Thomas Bailey, "The World Cruise of the American Battleship Fleet 1907-1909," *Pacific Historical Review*, I, 4 (December, 1932), wrote that the cruise had been in the planning for two years, although Roosevelt's *Autobiography* mentions that it was decided suddenly. According to Bailey, Roosevelt had postponed the trip during the San Francisco imbroglio to avoid further misunderstanding. See p. 390, quoting the *Boston Evening Transcript*, July 1, 1907.

15. From Lodge Mss., quoted in Howard Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore, 1957), 327.

16. David Starr Jordan, "Relations of Japan to the United States," in George Blakeslee, ed., *Japan and Japanese-American Relations* (New York, 1922), 7.

17. Walter MacCarthy, "Opposition to Oriental Immigration," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XXXIV, 2 (September, 1909), 307.

18. Three recent, important studies are Roger Daniels, *The Politics of Prejudice: The Anti-Japanese Movement in California and the Struggle for Japanese Exclusion* (Gloucester, Mass., 1966); Raymond Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt and Japan* (Seattle and London, 1966); and Charles Neu, *An Uncertain Friendship: Theodore Roosevelt and Japan, 1906-1909* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967). Still of considerable importance is Bailey's *Theodore Roosevelt*, which also serves as a handy source of some less accessible primary sources.

19. Denis Kearney, quoted by William Inglis, "The Width of a School Bench," *Harper's Weekly*, LI (January 19, 1907), 83.

20. See Jokichi Takamine, "The Japanese in America," in Blakeslee, *Japanese-American Relations*, 27; and *World Today*, XI, 6 (December, 1906). The latter saw the labor unions as a prime cause of California's race problem, working hand-in-glove with the Exclusion League to incite hostility.

21. See Sidney Gulick, *American-Japanese Problem*, for examples of the vicious, often contradictory, grounds for desiring Japanese exclusion; Fred H. Matthews, "White Community and 'Yellow Peril,'" *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, L, 4 (March, 1964), for an appraisal of Gulick's efforts on behalf of the Japanese and for the activities of others on the scene; and George Mowry, *The California Progressives* (Berkeley, 1951).

22. Elihu Root, "The Real Questions under the Japanese Treaty and the San Francisco School Board Resolution," *American Journal of International Law*, I (April, 1907), 277.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 283. Root was more accurate in his analysis of constitutional and international law than in his appraisal of the extent of bitterness evoked by the issue: "... never for a moment was there as between the government of the United States and the government of Japan, the slightest departure from perfect good temper, mutual confidence, and kindly consideration." *Ibid.*, 276.

24. "The Japanese School Question," *American Journal of International Law*, I (January, 1907) 150-53.

25. *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896). The Massachusetts precedent is *Roberts v. City of Boston*, 5th Cush. 198.
26. Amos S. Hershey, "Japanese School Question and the Treaty-making Power," *American Political Science Review*, I (May, 1907), 393, 399-400.
27. *Ibid.*, 409.
28. Quoted in William H. Thompson, "San Francisco and the Japanese," *World Today* (November 3, 1906), 1310.
29. *Japanese School Segregation Case*. The respondent's brief skillfully wove in a mass of precedent cases, including *Plessy*, *Roberts*.
30. Gilbert, "Japanese School Question."
31. Rep. Edwin Y. Webb of North Carolina, speech in the House of Representatives, "The Treaty-making Power and the State and the Japanese San Francisco School Controversy," February 16, 1907.
32. Rep. Anthony Michalek of Indiana, speech in the House of Representatives, "Immigration Bill—Exclusion of Japanese Labor," December 18, 1906.
33. *American Journal of International Law* (April, 1907), 451-52.
34. Quoted in *World Today*, XI (December, 1906), 1311.
35. Matthews, "Yellow Peril," 623, discusses the "bogey of miscegenation" which was the "most powerful of the evolutionary arguments in stampeding sentiment against the Japanese."
36. *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 6, 1906.
37. Flowers, *Japanese Conquest*, 11-12.
38. *San Francisco Argonaut*, November 10, 1906.
39. See Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, and George Kennan, "The Japanese in the San Francisco Schools," *Outlook*, LXXXVI (June, 1907), 246-52.
40. Hugh Borton, *Japan's Modern Century* (New York, 1955), 305. See also the statement by President Jordan in Ichihashi, "Emigration."
41. A. Whitney Griswold, *The Far Eastern Policy of the United States* (New Haven, 1938, reissued 1962), 350.
42. Kennan, "Japanese," 251.
43. *Review of Reviews*, XXXVI (July, 1907), 63.
44. Speech by Hayes in the House of Representatives, March 13, 1906, quoted in Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States* (Stanford, 1932), 239.
45. "The Japanese Protest," *Nation*, LXXXIII (1906), 364.
46. *Outlook*, LXXXVI (June 29, 1907) 460-62. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 43, writes: "The Japanese children were set apart because the whites were prejudiced against them, and the source of this prejudice, at least in San Francisco, appears to have been the belief that coolie labor was thwarting the work of the unions and lowering the American standard of living."
47. See Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese Immigration, Its Status in California* (San Francisco, 1915), 55.
48. "The Japanese in California," *World's Work*, XIII (March, 1907), 3690.
49. *Coast Seamen's Journal*, 1907, quoted in Carey MacWilliams, *Prejudice: Japanese Americans: Symbol of Racial Intolerance* (Boston, 1944), 28.
50. Hayes, "The Treaty-making Power and the Government."
51. Inglis, "Width of a School Bench," 82.
52. Flowers, *Japanese Conquest*, 11, 12, 16-17.
53. Webb, "Treaty-making Power."
54. Quoted in *Current Literature*, XCII, 7.
55. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 186.

56. Tupper and McReynolds, *Japan*, abstract the journal sentiments. Papers friendly to the Japanese included: *Providence Journal*, *New York Tribune*, *New York Evening Post*, *New York Globe*, *Philadelphia Press*, *Washington Evening Star*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Outlook*. Western papers not strongly anti-Japanese, or friendly to them, included the *Tacoma Ledger*, *Tacoma Daily News*, *Seattle News*, *Seattle Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. Strongly anti-Japanese among the Eastern newspapers were the Hearst journals; and among the Western and Southern journals, those strongly anti-Japanese included the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Examiner*, *San Francisco Call*, *Berkeley Gazette*, *Sacramento Union*, *Charleston News and Courier*, *Louisville Courier-Journal*, and the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*.

57. Samuel McClintock, "Anti-Japanese Legislation," *World Today* XVI (1909), 272.

58. Gilbert, "Japanese School Question." Other speeches of this nature in 1907 were delivered by Senators Barron of Georgia, Tillman of South Carolina, Underwood of Alabama, Burgess of Texas, and Williams of Mississippi. It should be noted that although the Southern legislators strongly tended, with their constituents, to be opposed to an influx of Japanese laborers, they preferred not to vote for an exclusion bill. They feared that by so doing, too much power would be given to the President, thus interfering with the states rights principle. When the exclusion vote was taken, most of the opposition was from these Southern Democrats.

59. Hayes, November 1906, quoted in MacWilliams, *Prejudice*, 31.

60. From the *Washington Evening Star*, quoted by the *Literary Digest* (November 30, 1906), 632, in Jesse Steiner, *The Japanese Invasion* (Chicago, 1917), 44.

61. Quoted by Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 318. Daniels, *Politics of Prejudice*, 36, writes of Roosevelt: "... despite his frequent protests to the contrary he was, along with the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries, a convinced racist. He was, however, willing to treat certain individuals of any race as equals."

62. *Japan Weekly Mail* (October 27, 1906), 542-43. Of the Japanese papers, the most influential were the *Jiji Shimpō*, *Kokumin Shimbun*, and *Asahi Shimbun*. The *Mainichi*, as mentioned above, was jingoistic, as was the *Soko Shimbun*.

63. Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 86.

64. From *Soko Shimbun*, October 25, 1906, quoted in Metcalf, "Report," 21. On October 25, four days after San Francisco excluded the Japanese children from the white schools, Viscount Aoki, the Japanese ambassador, called on Root demanding equality in treatment. And shortly thereafter, Mr. (later Baron) Ishii, director of the Commercial Bureau of the Japanese Foreign Office, was sent to San Francisco to study the school affair, in which city he was "most mercilessly and cruelly knocked down by some Americans," T. G. Komai, "America and Japan: The Japanese Case," *Spectator* (August 9, 1913), 441.

65. *Soko Shimbun*, October 26, 1906, in Metcalf, "Report," 20.

66. Quoted in *World Today*, XI (December, 1906), 1312-13.

67. MacWilliams, *Prejudice*, 27. Esthus, *Theodore Roosevelt*, sees the president's desire for naval expansion as perhaps having contributed to his tactics in the school crisis; however, Esthus concludes that racial prejudice was the crux of the matter. Neu, *Uncertain Friendship*, is less concerned with the navy aspect and instead writes that Roosevelt's fear for Republican party strength in the West made him sensitive to labor demands and anti-Japanese sentiments of West Coast citizens.

68. See Bailey, *Theodore Roosevelt*, 34.



# EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066

## All Enemies Look the Same

by Maisie and Richard Conrat



AIR RAIDS, espionage, and sabotage seemed entirely likely to Californians in the days and weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. A war hysteria which produced such popular myths as the ease in distinguishing between brave Chinese allies and bestial Japanese enemies (it had something to do with the shape of the eyes, if you remember) was itself capable of producing a profound public reaction against Japanese nationals and American citizens of Japanese ancestry.

But added to the kind of patriotic bushwa that afflicted German-Americans during the First World War was a history of extreme prejudice against Asians. The Oriental had long been an enemy in the eyes of many Californians. The proof



of inherent Japanese depravity was now at hand. And in those days when the news from the Far East was all news of Anglo-American defeats, there was at least one army of the enemy that could be overcome, a supposed underground army in America.

The rights of citizens against the wrath and passion of more numerous fellow-citizens are fragile. Thus a whole people amongst our many peoples was in effect charged and jailed upon the premise that one or another among them might be disloyal. Thirty years after, the argument seems absurd—but it did not seem absurd to Franklin Roosevelt when he signed Executive Order 9066 and it did not seem absurd to those who inspired the order for “removal” or to those who carried it out.

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## The Function of Anglo-American Racism in the Political Development of *Chicanos*

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*California's Mexican Americans, like all minority groups in the United States, have been victims of mental stereotype held by the "Anglo" majority. Often the effect of these stereotypes is to assign blame for conditions caused by racism on the victims rather than the purveyors of prejudice. For example, the fact that a large portion of a particular group is poor is explained by the group's "laziness" or "lack of ambition" rather than by the effects of discrimination. Ralph Guzman explores some of the political implications of the common stereotypes that have been applied to Chicanos in California and the Southwest.*

THE SOUTHWEST is a region that differs from the eastern seaboard geographically and sociologically. The conditions of social contact between those who held political power and those who did not were not the same. Thus the political socialization of minority groups like the *Chicanos*<sup>1</sup> followed paths that were only vaguely reminiscent of the Irish experience and that of other European immigrants who came to the East Coast.

Why the *Chicano* experience should differ so drastically from that of the European immigrants is explored in this essay. My thesis is that historical conditions of social contact between a group-in-power and a group-out-of-power, generate a number of attitudes, assumptions, judgments, and stereotypes—one of the other, that have a *major* influence upon both. These, I argue, are part of the political socialization of a people. To understand the political development of *Chicanos* in the Southwest, one must analyze two kinds of ideologies. One is the aggregation of articulated views, judgments, and presuppositions about ethnic groups that have been held by the dominant society—the Anglo view. For convenience, these are labeled *Anglo group ideologies*. The other is the aggregation of perceptions of the larger society by the minority and its internal self-appraisal, labeled

*Chicano group ideologies*—the *Chicano* view. My focus here is on Anglo group ideologies.

Contrary to an assumption popular in the East, the Southwest and Far West do not have a tradition of racial tolerance. The historical conditions of social contact between *Chicanos* and the larger Southwest society bear ample testimony to the opposite. A relevant contrast between this region and the rest of the United States is the different origin of the “foreigners.” Historically, the Southwestern “foreigners” were mainly American Indians and *Chicanos*. There were few blacks. After some time, people of recent European origin penetrated the Southwest. Many had already become “Americanized” elsewhere in the United States and they embraced the Anglo-Saxon notion of the subordinate position of Orientals, *Chicanos*, and Indians with great zeal. Thus, racial ideologies prevailing elsewhere in the nation found ready acceptance in the Southwest—only the targets were different.

The American obsession with race has indeed had a powerful influence on the *Chicano* people. This influence has differed in intensity from place to place as well as over time. In Texas, prevailing views of race have a Southern tinge, with blacks, as the reference population. In California racial views reflect the North, the South, and other regions of the country.

One of the effects of the majority’s racial ideologies has been the social, political and economic suppression of *Chicanos*. Politics has been one of the main arenas of competition in which *Chicanos* have long been unable to act with maximum effectiveness. This failure, often attributed to political apathy, in fact seems to reflect clear knowledge of Anglo institutional repression. Apathy implies a choice not to act while knowing that action is possible. In the past much of the reluctance of *Chicanos* to compete in politics reflected their belief that such action was not possible. *Chicanos* did not vote, not because voting was an Anglo thing, but because Anglos forbade *Chicano* involvement at the polls. American society imposed clear restrictions based on law and custom. These were enforced with violence and terror.

The political socialization of a minority group is retarded when the host society is perceived to be, or is indeed, hostile. By comparison, cultural factors, such as the often cited *individualism* of *Chicanos*, language deficiencies, and the apathy usually associated with poverty, have probably been of secondary importance. Fear has been a strong inhibiting factor in the world of the exploited: fear of the society that controls him, fear of his ethnic brothers, and often fear of himself. Fear stunts the political growth of any group and it also damages its educational and economic development. In the case of the *Chicanos*, some of their political development was, in fact, effectively reduced through self-stereotypes which often duplicated the



majority's perjorative views of the *Chicano* minority. The Anglo judgment that *Chicanos* are emotional can provide a convenient excuse for political and social failure. Similarly, transference of the opinion that *Chicanos* do not work hard from the economic sector to the political arena severely limits the *Chicano* community's opportunities to acquire meaningful political power. Both majority views establish the parameters for self-fulfilling prophecies.

The discussion of majority ideologies in the Southwest is divided in the following pages into decades so as to allow judgments on the varying degrees to which they inhibited *Chicano* political growth. Decades have been selected for this purpose without any claim that the society's articulated views really changed with the passage of each 10-year period. Evidently, majority views of the *Chicanos* were formed throughout the entire period of social contact that began in the early years of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> In large measure, the stereotypes formed during this period conformed to nativistic themes, emphasizing foreign-ness, hinting at radicalism, and at the unacceptability of Catholicism. Almost always *Chicanos* were assumed to represent a different religion and a different race. These themes sometimes led to sympathetic concern, but increasingly, with the wave of immigration that accompanied the Mexican revolution, they led to expressions of alarm.

In 1912 a sociology student from the University of Southern California conducted a study of *Chicanos* living in Los Angeles that was published in a Methodist mission magazine. Although his orientation was sympathetic, the student faithfully reproduced the view of *Chicanos* held in the dominant society of that time. His writings appeared at a time when border raids by Francisco (Pancho) Villa were common topics of conversation.

It is generally estimated that there are from 20,000 to 40,000 Mexicans within the city boundaries. . . . Economic reasons [are] of great influence in causing them to come to the United States. . . . Very few of the Mexicans are naturalized, due in the main to their ignorance of the possibility and somewhat to their prejudice against Americans and American customs. . . . The Mexican laborer is generally regarded as *less efficient* than other labor. . . . The chief fault found with the Mexican laborer is his *irregularity and uncertainty*. Much of this is caused by drunkenness. . . .

The Mexican *plane of living* is *probably the lowest* of any race in the City. . . . There is general antipathy for the Mexicans, and they are looked down upon by all races. The Mexicans meet this attitude with one of haughty indifference. . . . The social life of the Mexicans is meager in the extreme.

The Mexicans furnish more than their proportion of *criminals*. . . . These people are non-moral rather than immoral, but their conditions are immoral from the viewpoint of Christian civilization and are a perpetual challenge to us to improve them. . . . The small children attend public school. . . . but as soon as it is possible for them to do so, they *quit school and go to work*. The small children are very bright, quick,

attentive and responsive, but, after reaching the fifth grade, they become slow and dull. A general cause of this mental condition is more or less irregular attendance, due to home conditions. The problems presented by this *race of ignorant, illiterate and non-moral people, complicated by their low plane of living, their tendency to crime, and their bad housing conditions*, are serious in the extreme and urgently demand the attention of all Christian reformers and social workers. . . . [Emphases added]<sup>3</sup>

The document focuses attention on the reality component in the stereotyped view of *Chicanos*. Though admittedly using primitive research techniques, the above generalizations represent the student's attempt at systematic exploration of reality; official statistics are cited, interviews conducted, and some direct observations are made. In the political arena, on the other hand, ethnic stereotypes are based on a process of abstraction which—unlike the attempt at objectivity even in this primitive empirical research—often selects, exaggerates, and preserves observations without continuous check on “reality.” (Congressional hearings and similar investigations may be exceptions.) Once established as conventional categories, ethnic stereotypes, at least latently, incorporate a plan of action toward the ethnic group. As already indicated, the minority often inadvertently “cooperates” with the majority in perpetuating the stereotype. For example, accommodative minority leaders may find it convenient to relate to the dominant system in conventional terms, and “special concessions” may be made to the ethnic group based on its stereotyped characteristics. In this regard, the stereotype may become in part a self-fulfilling prophecy, insofar as its preservation establishes a universe of discourse within which *both* majority and minority can interact.

Thus, the statements made in this document were like—and yet unlike—statements made about *Chicanos* in the ensuing years. I turn to a detailed account of the period of the twenties.

Nativist feeling was at a high pitch in the 1920's. Concern over the preservation of the “American stock” was the subject of extensive public debate. In the Southwest, the debate took the form of fears that the region might be mongrelized by “Mexicans.” Samuel J. Holmes, a professor of zoology at the University of California, argued that *Chicanos* like the African slaves of an earlier era, represented a problem that might not end for centuries.<sup>4</sup> Similar warnings about the “danger of building up in this state a large mongrel population” were issued in Texas.<sup>5</sup> Apprehension that the American stock would be diluted by *Chicanos* was expressed by Robert F. Foerster, a Princeton professor of economics, in these words:

It is a deplorable fact that numerous, intelligent and enterprising one hundred per cent Americans, to say nothing of other brands, are busy helping along this insidious elimination of their own breed in favor of the progeny of Mexican peons who will continue to afflict us with an embarrassing race problem.<sup>6</sup>

The relative racial qualifications of the *Chicano* people were a subject of extensive discussion, often centering on the concept of the *mestizo* or the mixed race. Hybrids produced by the union of distant stocks might tend to be "superior to the poorer strain and inferior to the better strain."<sup>7</sup> On this basis, the exemption of Western Hemisphere immigrants from the national quota system of 1924 was debated on the floor of both the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives, but an amendment to include them in the system was soundly defeated. The issue was reopened in the years 1926 to 1930 when public debate focused for the first time directly on immigration from Mexico. Again, however, no action was taken. In the main, the insistence of Southwest agricultural employers that they needed Mexican labor, combined with foreign policy considerations, was sufficient to ward off attempts to legislate a curtailment of Mexican immigration. But the Congressional debate revealed again the then current preoccupation with race. Congressman John Box of Texas, who sponsored a bill in 1926 to include the Western Hemisphere countries under the quota law, stated that Mexican immigrants were "illiterate, unclean, peonized masses" who stemmed from "a mixture of Mediterranean-blooded Spanish peasants with low grade Indians who did not fight to extinction but submitted and multiplied as serfs."<sup>8</sup> Likewise, Senator John B. Kendrick observed "that of all the alien races they [the *Chicanos*] amalgamate the least with the white man; they live entirely in a separate way." But he added that they were really an orderly people in our country.<sup>9</sup>

In Texas, the dominant society tended to equate *Chicanos* with blacks, and notions of racial inferiority were easily transferred from one group to the other. The African strains that some *Chicano* people reflected were attributed to 19th century runaway slaves from Texas and Louisiana who settled in the state of Veracruz. It was reported that the Indian women of Veracruz like the "liveliness and good humor" of the persecuted blacks "better than the quieter ways of their own countrymen."<sup>10</sup> The fact that a few *Chicanos* were, indeed, descendants of black slaves from the South helped to validate the tendency to equate all *Chicanos* or at least the darker ones with black Americans.

Interestingly, the hopeful notion of the melting pot, so commonly applied to European immigrants in the 1920's was seldom invoked with respect to *Chicanos*. It was generally assumed that the latter represented a separate race with such foreign ideas and habits, social standards, and historical traditions that they were disqualified from membership in American society. To one writer *Chicanos* were an underprivileged and unasimilable group of people that threatened to "lessen the racial homogeneity of our population."<sup>11</sup>

Not all articulated views were so negative. For example, one writer stressed the *Chicano* population did produce good citizens when they were

paid a living and a stable wage.<sup>12</sup> Another believed that the *Chicano* was a *peon* (a peasant) who was not such a bad fellow even though he was “hopelessly more alien to the United States than any European.”<sup>13</sup> Still another observer concluded that the *Chicanos* were confused in their own minds as to whether they were or were not Americans.<sup>14</sup>

Because the *Chicano* was not seen as being assimilable and because he was not a black, it was suggested that he might represent a third separate group. The notion of a “third race” was also upheld by some Mexican intellectuals during this period. For example, Enrique Santibañez, the Mexican Consul General in San Antonio, Texas, said:

Judging the bronze race by its color and remembering that the Anglo-Saxon was not mixed with the colored races one must conclude that future generations of Mexicans, living in the United States, will live apart from the larger society, which is basically white and nordic, for as long as we can see. In other words, Mexicans will never be an integral part of the spiritual life of the American people. . . .

Consequently, the United States will never be a harmonious social unit as it was when it was founded. Instead the United States will be a society divided into three parts: white, bronze, and black.<sup>15</sup>

Pressure from the white people to keep *Chicanos* on the same level as the black was resisted by the *Chicano* people, according to Handman. Pressure of this type, Handman predicted, would someday cause bitterness, animosity, and conflict. Interestingly, he intimated that *Chicanos* would revolt against the larger society before the blacks did. In this respect Handman’s comment is noteworthy.

The Negro-white situation is difficult enough, but it is simple. The Negro has his place in the scheme of things. He is disfranchised and he accepts it—for how long I do not know—but he accepts it. He is limited in his educational opportunities and in his occupational field, and he accepts that also. But the Mexican is theoretically limited neither in his educational opportunities nor in his occupational field. Neither is he disfranchised.<sup>16</sup>

Enough has been said to suggest that, reflecting a general trend in American Society, the core of the Southwest ideology between 1920 and 1930 in regard to *Chicanos* was clearly racial. However, the thrust of this concern was not *how Chicacos* could be brought into the larger community. It was instead focused on differentiation, on characteristics that served to rationalize the social exclusion of the group. Differentiation was made using social referents familiar to the majority; namely black people and American Indians. Majority group ideologies in the 1920’s, of course, greatly deterred the political socialization of *Chicanos*. With the possible exception of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), a middle class group with important links in the larger society, *Chicanos* appeared to offer

no significant resistance to this condition. Yet they were not silent and they did not accept the ideological judgments of the larger society. Reaction came on the *barrio* level in neighborhood *platicas* (conversations) and only sporadically from organized *Chicano* groups. The attempted formation of a Federation of Mexican Laborers' Unions and the strike of cantaloupe pickers in California's Imperial Valley in the late 1930's is one example of organized *Chicano* reaction. However, both of these episodes tended to confirm the Anglo view that *Chicano* organizations were susceptible to foreign ideologies that threatened the American social order. The violent Imperial Valley strike, a precursor of labor strife, served notice that *Chicanos* could be effective revolutionaries, proving themselves to be considerably less docile than was commonly believed.<sup>17</sup>

Anglo preoccupation with race in the 1930's centered on the masses of Mexicans who had poured into the United States in the previous decade and who continued to cross the border without formal immigration. These illegals were called "wet" Mexicans because they often waded or swam across the Rio Grande. They entered the United States, it was charged, to "become the fathers of born-on-the-soil offspring, whose right to American citizenship cannot be denied."<sup>18</sup> The prolific birth rate of these people was seen as a threat to American society. *Chicano* children were considered a hybrid race of inferior quality. "Their white strain," one observer said, "may be 1/16, 1/32, or 1/64. The rest may be Amerind (American Indian), Negro, or a mixture of the two."<sup>19</sup>

With the growth of the feminist movement in the United States, attention turned to the plight of the *Chicano* woman who was believed to be completely submissive to the whims and wishes of the male. According to this notion, the freedom that American women enjoyed was incomprehensible and bewildering to *Chicanas*. To the militant feminists, *Chicanas* were stark reminders of an archaic social system where the males possessed absolute authority. Unfamiliar with the English language and long conditioned to a life of personal sacrifice, *Chicanas* apparently were not recruited by the feminist movement of this era. However, a few middle class *Chicanas* became involved in prototypical protest movements.<sup>20</sup>

The empathy and chagrin of the American woman was expressed by Ruth Allen who wrote:

Uncomplainingly, she labors in the field for months at a time and receives as a reward from the head of the family, some gew-gaw from the five and ten cent store, or at best, a new dress. The supremacy of the male is seldom disputed. First her father, then her husband, or, if she becomes a widow, her son, receive her unquestioning service.<sup>21</sup>

As the *Chicano* people became more evident in or near large urban centers, the majority's attention turned to the problem of crime. *Chicanos*



were considered a people with substantial and perhaps irradicable criminal proclivities. There was an assumption of criminality particularly in confrontations between school, police, and social welfare officials. The young with their stylishly long hair, bizarre dress habits, and reputed drug habits were the special targets of an irate majority group. The belief that all *Chicanos* had deeply imbedded criminal tendencies was not easily disproved when the jails were almost always crowded with *Chicano* inmates.

The judgment of criminality and the numbers who were actually in prison combined to cement the view that *Chicanos* were, in fact, dangerous to the social order. In California, for example, a state prison report claimed that sixty per cent of the violations of prison laws and rules were caused by *Chicano* prisoners who refused to conform. One writer noted that California has "as many Mexican prisoners as the entire prison population of two American states."<sup>22</sup>

Another significant ideology during the 1930's was the view that *Chicanos* were a docile, unintelligent people who were susceptible to communism. This view was stressed as the Anglo fear of communism increased. Bogardus, a sociologist, warned that "A Christmas basket for one day in the year and poverty for 365 days . . . [was] poor philanthropy . . . to keep the Mexican from becoming a bolshevist."<sup>23</sup> Communist recruitment in *Chicano barrios* during the 1930's remains as another unwritten chapter in the history of these people. For example, the International Workers of the World and other radical groups entered *Chicano* neighborhoods in massive efforts to recruit members. Their limited success in recruiting bore strange fruit in the 1950's when the federal government arrested and deported scores of *Chicanos* who had joined the IWW during this earlier period.

As the Southwest became engulfed in the Great Depression, protection of native labor and the reduction of welfare expenses were Anglo concerns. In an attempt to resolve both needs, *Chicanos*, whatever the legality of their presence in the United States, were rounded up and forcibly removed from the United States. This episode of extreme Anglo hostility represents still another little known chapter in the history of the *Chicanos*.

During the 1930's interactions between *Chicanos* and the larger society became varied, and so did mutual perceptions. The conditions of social contact which were previously rural and caste-like in quality altered slightly. A few (very few) obtained membership in traditional labor unions. Others attended meetings of organizations like the IWW. The era of the New Deal, with its stress on social reforms, helped to change a few majority group attitudes toward *Chicanos* but not in a substantial manner. Still, on the whole, the caste-like relationship that typified life in the rural areas was modified. An unsteady foundation, the beginning of the urban phase of the *Chicano* people's political socialization had been established.

World War II increased the urbanization of *Chicano* population; but urban institutions were ill prepared to cope with the *Chicano* people. Both public and private agencies saw *Chicanos* as problems, and rarely as potential contributors to society. School systems established special schools and police agencies made special efforts to discover the inner workings of the *Chicano* mind. An example of law enforcement research in this area can be seen in a 1942 report to the Los Angeles County Grand Jury by a member of the Sheriff's Department from the same county. In the early 1940's juvenile disorders involving *Chicanos* had increased. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department assigned Ed Duran Ayres to make a study. His analysis included the conclusion that all *Chicanos* were biologically inferior and disposed to violence. Officer Ayres said that *Chicanos* were unlikely to respect the American tradition of a fair fight because of their peculiar genetic make-up. The Ayres report states in part:

The caucasian, especially the Anglo-Saxon, when engaged in fighting, particularly among youths, resorts to fisticuffs and may at times kick each other, which is considered unsportive, but this Mexican element considers all that to be a sign of weakness, and all he knows and feels is a desire to use a knife or some lethal weapon. In other words, his desire is to kill, or at least let blood. That is why it is difficult for the Anglo-Saxon to understand the psychology of the Indian or even the Latin, and it is just as difficult for the Indian or the Latin to understand the psychology of the Anglo-Saxon or those from Northern Europe.<sup>24</sup>

The Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department wrote a letter to the foreman of the Grand Jury endorsing the Ayres findings:

Lieutenant Ayres of the Sheriff's Department, gave an intelligent statement of the psychology of the Mexican people, particularly the youths. He stated many of the contributing factors that caused the gang activities.<sup>25</sup>

A year later, in June, 1943, the Los Angeles zoot-suit riots began. The riots were widely reported, and they brought *Chicanos* before the nation much more forcefully than had the meager ethnic writings of the past. The riots were violent upheavals. The participants were, on the one hand, young *Chicanos*—teenagers and young adults—called *pachucos* by the *Chicano* bourgeoisie. Armed forces personnel and white civilians of all ages represented the other side.<sup>26</sup> Sporadic fighting in bars, theatres, streetcars, and the public streets continued for five days.

Newspaper accounts were, in large part, unfavorable to the *Chicanos*. There were racial overtones in the reporting and much of what officer Ayres had written provided a basis for hasty journalism. The good guys were Anglos and members of the armed forces and the bad guys were *Chicanos*. On a purely impressionistic level, there was something quite natural about these confrontations; *Chicanos* and Anglo-Americans squared

off against each other as they had for generations, only this time the battleground was the city of Los Angeles instead of the agricultural fields and the mining camps of the past. *Chicanos* objected to the role of the newspapers but there was little that they could do. Daily newspapers published stories in which armed forces personnel were always cleared of wrongdoing.

A number of well-known public figures addressed themselves to the issue of race. Eleanor Roosevelt suggested that the riots could be traced to long-standing discrimination against *Chicanos*. She expressed concern for the welfare of *Chicanos* living in California and in states along the border. In Los Angeles, authorities denied Mrs. Roosevelt's allegations, and so did the California State Chamber of Commerce.<sup>27</sup> Earl Warren, then Governor of the State, argued that "this isn't a Mexican problem, this is an American problem. It is one of juvenile delinquency . . ."<sup>28</sup> There is no question that the riots had serious social consequences. On the one hand, they added one more bitter experience to the history of the *Chicano* people; on the other, then convinced many members of the larger society that *Chicanos* were not assimilable.

Significantly, sources for this period are generally letters, official documents, and newspaper accounts. Serious scholarly analysis of these events is scarce. In an article for the *American Journal of Sociology* Turner and Surace did a content analysis of newspaper articles that appeared during this period.<sup>29</sup> Yet newspapers and other literature remain as principal sources.

The *Christian Century* magazine noted that news pictures supported the conclusion that these were race riots. Overt hostility was clearly directed at *Chicanos* because "no white wearers of these bizarre clothes [zoot-suits] were disturbed" and because "hundreds of Mexicans and Negroes who were not wearing zoot-suits were attacked."<sup>30</sup>

It is, of course, difficult to link the overt behavior of Anglo mobs to Anglo ideology. It is similarly quite a task to show empirically that *Chicano* street corner societies based their actions on a minority ideology. Nevertheless, substantive assumptions of social roles were involved on both sides of the conflict. On one side, second generation *Chicano* youths refused the subservient social roles that American institutions demanded for them. They fought the larger society without strategies, without internal communications, and almost, it seemed, with suicidal recklessness. For young *Chicanos* the zoot-suit riots were not unlike a pogrom; the street battles involved "us" and "them" explicitly and without gentle protocol. On the other side, equally young Anglos from many parts of the United States, a terribly frightened mass of confused, uprooted draftees with over-blown notions of Americanism found ideal conditions for the displacement of

pressured frustrations in the foreign-looking *Chicano* neighborhoods. With only a slight mental adjustment, the *Chicano* could even look Japanese. For *Chicanos*, the sounds of hate and the acts of violence were not unfamiliar—they were deeply rooted in the folklore, the ballads and the legends of *la raza*. Uniformed or not, the Anglos were, as always, the enemy.

Turner and Surace saw a conflict of ideologies within the majority group. Some *Chicanos* were associated with romantic Olvera Street (an important tourist attraction), and other romantic images. Others were linked with a rising tide of juvenile vandalism and deviant social behavior. In order to resolve this contradiction, and to provide a more explicit moral justification for racial discrimination, an unambiguous, unfavorable symbol was needed. The two sociologists suggested that the zoot-suit label had connotations of sex crimes, draft-dodging, gang warfare, and other unsavory images. The zoot-suit label which technically applied across ethnic and class lines to all wearers of the garb, was simply equated to *Chicanos*. Thus *Chicanos*, whatever their clothing preferences, were beaten, arrested and otherwise humiliated by non-discriminating members of the larger society.<sup>31</sup>

The conditions of social contact between *Chicanos* and the larger society were altered by the demographic change from rural to urban but they were not improved. Greater social mobility—meaning freedom to live where they chose, eat at restaurants they could afford, visit public facilities that offered comfort and rest—was not forthcoming for all *Chicanos*.

The ground rules of American society in the cities were often even more explicit than they were in the agrarian areas. Signs on house porches and in employment agencies advised *Chicanos* in Spanish and in English that they were not welcome. When written signs were missing the silent language of the doorman, the foreman, the school principal, and others, made it apparent that social ingress was not possible.

The state of Texas to this day provides the best examples of social exclusion. For example, in 1945 a U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Education learned that *Chicanos* from McCarney, Texas, traveled forty-five miles to Fort Stockton for a haircut because Anglo barbers would not cut *Chicano* hair and *Chicanos* could not legally become barbers in McCarney.<sup>32</sup> Other witnesses reported that they could not use a public street to celebrate a Fourth of July because the holiday was “for white people only.”<sup>33</sup> In a Texas restaurant a *Chicano* customer, asked to identify his race, answered “Misanthrope” and was promptly served.

The war years forced *Chicanos* to interact widely and intensely with the larger society. Change had to take place because *Chicanos* and other disadvantaged groups were needed in the defense factories and in the battlefields. The competence of *Chicanos* as semi-skilled workers modified some

stereotype attitudes. At one Los Angeles area aircraft company an enterprising *Chicano* rose from the position of custodian to a high administrative post "mostly on nerve and need."<sup>34</sup>

On the battle front, the fighting qualities of *Chicano* servicemen serving in integrated units similarly influenced majority group reservations about their loyalty. While the war years did not completely reverse majority views of the past, they did bring about increased social interaction between *Chicanos* and non-*Chicanos*. For *Chicanos*, the war years became another important stage in their urban political socialization. The war experience and post-war developments, such as the educational opportunities offered to *Chicanos* through the G.I. Bill of Rights, helped *Chicanos* to see American society more clearly.

The majority's views of *Chicano* political behavior have, of course, a very direct bearing on the political participation of *Chicanos*. These views have been a part of the Anglo ideologies as far back as the early years of this century. Among the most important are (1) that *Chicanos* in general are submissive and, therefore not capable of effective political activity; (2) that *Chicanos* are deeply imbued with foreign values and, therefore, cannot understand the American political system; and (3) that *Chicanos* cannot achieve ethnic unity. These views have more or less persisted to the present day.

It was often said that *Chicanos* had values that were not consonant with the American value system. In politics, for example, *Chicanos* were not expected to understand cherished beliefs about the rights of man, freedom of religion, and other constitutional guarantees. *Chicanos* were considered products of a semi-feudal, colonial social system where the poor obeyed the dictates of benevolent employers. *Chicano* women, Anglo ideologues argued, were shamefully mistreated by their husbands. Finally, it was argued that Roman Catholics, particularly primitive Roman Catholics, could not possibly practice religious freedom.

The assumption of submissiveness carried with it the belief that *Chicanos* were not interested in the acquisition of political power. It was held that members of this minority were accustomed to the commands of priests and labor *patrones*. Consequently, personal initiative was not a well developed trait. People without personal initiative, it was rationalized, could not aspire to the control of political institutions.

The conclusion that *Chicanos* were irrevocably Catholic and eternally foreign was a powerful and pervasive conclusion. The Roman Catholic Church was, indeed, foreign and totally overwhelming. Fear existed that *Chicanos* would react according to the direction of the Church once they acquired political power. Traditional Anglo mistrust of the Roman Catholic Church found a new target in the *Chicano* group. In Los Angeles,



civic meetings held in parish halls reinforced the belief that priests and nuns guarded the political life of their impressionable but devout parishioners. The truth is that the Roman Catholic Church, operated by Anglo nuns and priests, did exercise substantial political control over devout *Chicanos*.

Well-meaning individuals who were willing to help the *Chicano* people during the early post-war years were openly skeptical about the ability of these people to organize effectively. Liberal democrats in particular were doubtful. In Los Angeles they greeted the first mass registration of *Chicano* voters in the country with aplomb. While viewing the figures that reported great success, a liberal Democrat said, "So they're registered, will they vote?"

Ideologies are often inconsistent. For example, in the 1930's a view diametrically opposed to the assumption of an incurable ethnic disunity existed. *Chicanos* were considered to be group-minded, and thus there was apprehension that they might develop a Tammany Hall type of organization. Evidence for this fear of *Chicano* bloc voting and machine politics came from experience in the state of New Mexico. Ethnic politics in that state proved to some observers that *Chicanos* practiced a religious-ethnic solidarity even within the political system. Only one party, the Democrats or the Republicans, received the votes of the *Chicanos* according to one Anglo scholar. He indicated that New Mexico's *Chicano* population would accept whatever political party their leaders designated. As a consequence, recruitment of *Chicano* voters by *non-Chicano* outsiders was considered difficult. "This is something our Anglos . . . find extremely irritating," a writer commented.<sup>35</sup> New Mexico, then, where the political involvement of the *Chicanos* was extremely high (when one compares that state with the rest of the Southwest), justified an ideological conclusion that was out of phase with judgments about disunity made in other regions.

Why the Anglo majority would appear to emphasize ethnic unity in New Mexico while underscoring disunity elsewhere is not difficult to understand when region and time are considered. The *Chicano* population was deeply rooted in New Mexico when American political institutions were imposed. The state's institutions were already in *Chicano* hands, and group mindedness and religious-ethnic solidarity was indeed a reality. New Mexicans reacted negatively to outsiders—the conquering Anglos who seized their land with the force of arms. Nevertheless, in terms of time, New Mexico *Chicanos* had a head start of a few generations over *Chicanos* from other states, particularly those who came later in the 20th century. *Chicanos* in New Mexico represented an original population as opposed to the immigrant population from Mexico that followed. New Mexicans appeared to interact with American society *as a group* with a solidarity that distinguished them sharply from *Chicanos* living elsewhere.

Still another image of *Chicanos* was that as a group they were easily controlled. While this notion appealed to many members of the dominant Anglo society, it tended to repel others. In the 1920's and 1930's, fear was expressed that *Chicanos* would not vote for the "vested interests" in agriculture and industry on which they depended and that rural landlords, in particular, would be able to herd them to the polls with "banners flying."<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, it was said that the group was also easy prey for demagogues. "Socialism, the I.W.W. and Communism find a ready soil for their seed among the Mexicans in our country," said one writer who deplored *Chicano* "gullibility."<sup>37</sup>

Thus, the apprehensions of Anglo society militated against political activity by *Chicanos*. Adding to the Anglo majority's fears was a feeling of uncertainty, ambivalence, and frustration with regard to *Chicano* leadership. Until World War II it was commonly believed that the group was devoid of responsible leaders who could stimulate a sense of collective commitment—part of an Anglo ideology that *Chicanos* were quiescent and satisfied with life at it was. Typical of this view was an Anglo businessman's statement that *Chicanos* were a contented and leaderless people "who did not, in the last analysis, know what they wanted. They are like children."<sup>38</sup> Finally, *Chicanos* were considered to be even more handicapped because socially mobile *Chicanos*, the economic achievers, tended to forsake life in the *barrio*, thus depriving lower class *Chicanos* of an articulate middle class.<sup>39</sup>

Anglo expectations concerning *Chicano* leadership have always had a significant impact on the political participation of this minority. This impact became even greater after World War II when growing urbanization and the return of *Chicano* veterans who did maintain their contact with people living in the *barrio* increased the political potential of the group. The importance of Anglo ideologies stems partly from the fact that the validation of *Chicano* leaders has often come not from the minority itself but from Anglo society—a condition that parallels the political history of other ethnic or racial groups in this country and has only recently been modified in the case of blacks who prefer self-determination. Thus, Anglos would urge *Chicanos* to find and develop leaders, with the implicit understanding that these would be "acceptable"; or they would express distrust of individuals who represented themselves as *Chicano* spokesmen. It was the political power structure of the dominant Anglo society that ultimately decided who were legitimate *Chicano* leaders. The problem of the validation of *Chicano* leadership has continued to this day.

The aggregated views, judgments, and presuppositions about the *Chicano* minority held by the larger Anglo society have been described. To recapitulate, they constitute constellations of ideologies that differ from

one place to another and from one historical period to the next. In order to clarify what is meant by majority ideologies, the notion of conditions of social contact between the minority and the majority was re-examined in terms of other American ethnic groups. In each instance it was shown that social contact between the minority and the majority generated mutual views that usually hampered and only occasionally assisted the minority group to grow politically. Conditions of social contact on the eastern seaboard were different from those that existed in the Southwest; the ethnic actors were different and so were their reasons for being in this social order. *Chicanos* initially by-passed the well-known process of urban political socialization. While there were few political machines in the Southwest, fear that they might become common in *Chicano* areas was expressed. This fear, and other social expressions concerning *Chicanos*, impinged upon their political experience. They grew politically within an oppressive, racist environment that clearly restricted social opportunity. Within this context of explicit and implicit social discrimination and economic exploration, *Chicanos* created counter-ideologies that contained judgments of the Anglo social order. The contents of those counter-ideologies and their function in the increased political consciousness of *Chicanos* remains to be examined.

#### NOTES

1. The term *Chicano*, once used almost exclusively by poor, lower class Mexicans who struggled for economic survival in the crowded *barrios* of the Southwest, was also avoided by the Mexican bourgeoisie who lived in more comfortable surroundings. Today, the term has been re-enforced, particularly by the young descendants of both economic classes. It reflects the central thesis of this paper: that American racism in the Southwest limited and attempted to destroy the political development of a people whose major crime was grinding poverty. The term Mexican is used here only to refer to citizens of Mexico or in order to make clear a particular point requiring the use of that term. Otherwise *Chicano* is used throughout the essay.

2. See Cecil Robinson, *With the Ears of Strangers* (Tucson, 1965).

3. *El Mexicano* (November-December, 1913), 1; (January, 1914), 1; and (April, 1914), 2.

4. Kenneth Roberts, "The Docile Mexican," *Saturday Evening Post*, CC (February 18, 1928), 165.

5. William E. Garnett, "Immediate and Pressing Race Problems of Texas," *Proceedings of the Southwestern Political and Social Science Association* (Austin, 1925), 35-36.

6. Samuel J. Holmes, "Perils of Mexican Invasion," *North American Review*, CCXXVII (1929), 622.

7. Robert F. Forester, *The Racial Problems Involved in Immigration from Latin America and the West Indies to the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1925), 330-331.

8. For details and documentation see Ronald Wyse, "The Position of Mexicans in the Immigration and Nationality Laws," in Leo Grebler, *Mexican Immigration to the United States: The Record and its Implications* ("Mexican American Study Project," Advance Report 2, University of California, Los Angeles, 1966), D-9 to D-11.

9. See U.S. Congress, Senate, *Restriction of Western Hemisphere Immigration*, 1928, Hearings, 71.
10. Kenneth Roberts, "Wet and Other Mexicans," *Saturday Evening Post*, (February 4, 1928), 11.
11. Frederick Simpich, "The Little Brown Brother Treks North," *Independent*, CXVI (February 27, 1926), 239.
12. "Let it be said that there is no doubt as to the ultimate ability of the Mexicans to become a good citizen. Pay him a living and stable wage which will enable him to raise his family to the American standard, and put him in an American community which opens its schools and other friendly agencies to him, and he soon surprises and silences his detractors." Charles A. Tomson, "What of the Bracero?" *Survey*, LIV (June 1, 1925), 292.
13. Richard Lee Strout, "A Fence for the Rio Grande," *Independent*, CXX (June 2, 1928), 520.
14. Helen W. Walker, "Mexican Immigrants and American Citizenship," *Sociology and Social Research*, 1928-1929, XIII (1929), 470.
15. Translated from Enrique Santibañez, *Ensayo acerca de la inmigración Mexicana en los Estados Unidos* (San Antonio, 1930) 95.
16. Max Sylvanus Handman, "The Mexican Immigrant in Texas," *Proceedings National Conference of Social Work*, LIII (1926), 338.
17. See *Mexicans in California*, Report of Governor C.C. Young's Mexican Fact-Finding Committee (San Francisco, 1930), 171. Discussion of this point can also be found in Leo Grebler, *Mexican Immigration*, 24.
18. C. M. Goethe, "Peons Need Not Apply," *World's Work*, LIX (November, 1930), 47.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Middle class *Chicanas*, or at least women who could read and write the English language and who had an economic base, led some of the protests of the *barrio* in the 1930's. They would storm the court house, the offices of the social workers, or would bar the path of investigating officials while shouting and gesturing in a most "un-Mexican" manner. Their little-known role suggests still another area deserving intensive historical analysis.
21. Ruth Allen, "Mexican Poen Women in Texas," *Sociology and Social Research*, XVI (November-December 1931), 131.
22. Goethe, "Peons Need Not Apply," 48.
23. Emory Bogardus, *The Mexican in the United States* (Los Angeles, 1934), 48.
24. Letter written by Ed Duran Ayres to E. W. Oliver, Foreman, Los Angeles County Grand Jury, 1942, 2. Copy on file with the UCLA Mexican American Study Project.
25. C. B. Horrall, Letter to Foreman Oliver, on file with the UCLA Mexican American Study Project.
26. The garments that these young people wore were called "drapes," "zoots," and were synonymous with *Chicanos*. A newspaper explanation of the history and use of zoot suits includes the observation that "many a young Mexican in a zoot suit

works hard and takes his money home to mamacita for frijoles refritos, . . ." Timothy Turner, "Zoot Suits Still Parade Here Despite OPA Ban," *Los Angeles Times*, March 22, 1943, sec. II, 8.

27. Fletcher Bowron, then Mayor of Los Angeles, told newspaper reporters that, "Nothing that has occurred can be construed as due to prejudice against Mexicans or discrimination against young men of any race. Neither is there a foundation for anyone to say that attacks or arrests have been directed toward members of minority groups." *Los Angeles Daily News*, June 10, 1943, 3.

28. *Los Angeles Examiner*, June 17, 1943, Sec. 1, 1.

29. The use of the term *Mexican* in newspapers is carefully traced by these two scholars over a ten and one-half year period. The use of the symbol, they say, led to overt hostility on the part of members of the majority group who were, inadvertently, goaded to act against the *Chicanos*. For further details about this hypothesis see Ralph H. Turner and Samuel J. Surace, "Zoot Suiters and Mexicans: Symbols in Crowd Behavior," *The American Journal of Sociology*, LXII (July 1956), 14-20. See also comments by Neil J. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (London, 1962), 105-106.

30. "Portent of Storm," *Christian Century*, LX (June, 1943), 735.

31. This discussion rests heavily on the article by Ralph H. Turner and Samuel J. Surace.

32. Statement of Alonzo S. Perales, Chairman, Committee of One Hundred, Director General, League of Loyal Americans, San Antonio, Texas, U.S. Congress Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, Hearings, Fair Employment Practice Act on S.101, S.459, 79th Congress, 1945, 150.

33. *Ibid.*

34. Mr. Paul Zamudio (pseudonym) was first a janitor, then an interpreter, and eventually a high ranking officer in the company.

35. The ideological conclusion that *Chicanos* represented a threat is well documented by Mary H. Austin, "Mexicans and New Mexico," *Survey Graphic*, LXVI (May, 1931), 143.

36. See Kenneth L. Roberts, "Wet and Other Mexicans," 12.

37. Thomas Brown, "The Challenge of Mexican Immigration," *The Missionary Review of the World*, L (September, 1927), 193.

38. Frances Jerome Woods, *Mexican Ethnic Leadership in San Antonio, Texas* (Washington, D.C., 1949), 23-24, 49.

39. Leonard Broom and Eshref Shevky, "Mexicans in the United States," *Sociology and Social Research*, XXXVI (1951-1952), 54.



## Book Reviews

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*Uprooted Americans.* By Dillon S. Myer. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1971. 360 pp. \$8.50.)

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*Reviewed by FEROL EGAN, author of the recent award-winning history, The El Dorado Trail.*

NATIONS HAVE A NATURAL tendency to cover up shameful acts with euphemistic terminology that rightfully belongs in George Orwell's 1984. Such was the case during World War II when the United States allowed the military to dictate policy and bring about the unconstitutional removal of the Japanese-Americans from their West Coast homes and place them in tar-paper houses smack in the middle of nowhere—houses surrounded by distance, barbed wire, guards, and gun towers. These detention camps were called War Relocation Centers. Put into meaningful English, the term meant one thing: over 110,000 persons—70,000 of them citizens—were placed in prisons because of their nationality.

Many books have been written about this disgraceful period in our history, but *Uprooted Americans* differs in that Dillon S. Myer was the director of the War Relocation Authority for most of its existence. In this most difficult position, he managed to prevent outright racists from making these camps into something far worse than they were; defended the Japanese-Americans against outrageous and irresponsible attacks by the media, ex-sports writers suddenly become race-bating columnists, wild-eyed Congressmen, and such ignoble “civic defenders” as the American Legion and the Native Sons of the Golden West. Myer also was instrumental in opening the way for the Nisei to move out of the camps and go east to finish interrupted college and university training, and he helped to clear the way so that the Nisei could join the U.S. Army, where they earned everlasting fame in the 442nd Combat Team that fought with outstanding bravery and distinction in the Italian campaign.

Most of all, though, Myer handled the many problems of detention camp life with warmth and humanity. For this, he deserves all the credit given to him. Yet, it is strange that in the flow of history that a good man should be remembered for being a humane jailer.

In an attempt to show why the Japanese-Americans were removed from their homes, Myer begins his book with a short chapter on the history of anti-Japanese attitudes on the West Coast. In fact, to give a full picture of the development of racist attitudes, Myer goes back in time to the period of the early Tokugawa Shoguns when Japan launched itself into an isolation policy that lasted until the arrival of Commodore Matthew C. Perry in 1854. But even after this re-opening of Japan, there were few immigrants bound for the United States until the late part of the 19th century and the beginning of this century. However, as immigration increased, California became a center for anti-Japanese attitudes, and the voices of bigotry were openly expressed by the Hearst Press, the McClatchy Press, the Los Angeles *Times*, trade unionists (especially the late Dave Beck), and by various agricultural organizations. All this time, the Issei immigrants could not become citizens because “our first immigration law, passed in 1790, provided that only ‘free whites’ could be

naturalized." Then to add even more racial bias, it was not possible in California after 1913 for Japanese immigrants to own "agricultural land or to lease such land for a period exceeding three years."

Continued anti-Japanese legislation and anti-Japanese propaganda created mythology and fear. The Japanese were different. They looked different. They ate different food. They spoke a different language. They worked long hours for small wages. And they stayed in their own communities. Of course, it was not fashionable to consider why these differences existed; nor did it enter the public mind that these immigrants and their native-born sons and daughters lived in their own communities mainly because they were not entirely free to live anywhere else.

Year after year a mystique about Japanese-Americans grew and grew in the fertilizer of ignorance. By the start of World War II, the public was ready and willing to believe almost anything about them. At this point of hysteria, there was no great liberal leader to call a halt to the removal of a total population that equaled the size of present-day Berkeley. Instead, General John B. DeWitt was given more than a free hand. Unlike Admiral Nimitz and General Emmons, who did not go along with the notion to evacuate all the Japanese-Americans from Hawaii, General DeWitt received all the help he needed from such West Coast leaders as California's Attorney General Earl Warren who said:

I have come to the conclusion that the Japanese situation in this state today, may well be the Achilles heel of the entire civilian defense effort. Unless something is done it may bring about a repetition of Pearl Harbor.

With support coming from Attorney General Earl Warren and Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox, the stage was set for a tragic drama. Step by step, Dillon Myer peels back the layers of bigotry, the diary of fear that resulted in the betrayal of the Japanese-Americans. Then he carefully documents the war years, the camp years, and the returning home years after the end of the war. Everything is here, and it is a book that should be required reading for all Americans. For it proves one thing beyond any shadow of a doubt: "It can and did happen here!" The big question that *Uprooted Americans* cannot answer is: "Can it happen again?"

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*The Other Californians: Prejudice and Discrimination under Spain, Mexico, and the United States to 1920.* By Robert F. Heizer and Alan F. Almquist. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971. 278 pp. \$7.95).

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Reviewed by ROGER OLMSTED, Editor of the CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL QUARTERLY.

In *The Other Californians*, the distinguished University of California (Berkeley) anthropologists Robert Heizer and Alan Almquist have put together an anthology to a greater extent than they have themselves synthesized the history of racism in California. The extensive quotations from multitudinous sources give the reader the real flavor of official or majority attitudes toward "the others" that one would not be apt to find in a more usual scholarly approach. Just as a compendium of racist rhetoric from the mouths of Californians this book deserves a place on the shelves of California historians.

Nearly half of the book concerns the historic treatment of the California Indian.

Against the charge that the anthropologist authors have overweighted the work toward their area of specialty, one may argue that the extermination of nearly 300,000 Indians by Spaniard, Mexican, and American well deserves to loom larger, for once, than the more sophisticated (and less deadly) attacks upon subsequent "others." At the same time, the work would be much stronger if it had ended with the debates in the California Constitutional Convention regarding the rights of Indians, blacks, and other non-caucasians, or better, if it had followed up the theme only through the Gold Rush years. Then such real contributions as the detailed passages on Indian indenture and slavery would not have been marred by association with the very weak chapters on the Chinese and Japanese, chapters which are so obviously afterthoughts that they fail to mention Denis Kearney and the Workingmen's Party or the Alien Land Act. The cut-off date of 1920 itself makes no sense except as it indicates that the authors had run out of steam long before that date and recognized the increasing folly of carrying the work forward. Yet a partly excellent work is better than none at all, and if *The Other Californians* is at its best in dealing with the California Indians, we should read it for that.

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*Manual of Hispanic Bibliography.* Compiled by David W. Foster and Virginia Ramos Foster. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1970. 206 pp. \$11.00.)

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*Reviewed by* ROBERT R. MILLER, *Professor of History, California State College at Hayward.*

RESEARCHERS, WRITERS, and reference librarians will welcome this fine addition to the field of bibliographic guides. Essentially this volume is a bibliography of bibliographies relating to Spanish and Spanish American literature. Historians and social scientists will find many references to works about the Spanish borderlands, and an entire section on bibliographies of the Latin American republics, arranged by country. Other topics include references to lists of unpublished theses, several categories of published bibliographies, guides to periodical literature, guides to libraries and collections, and period bibliographies. There are 796 annotated entries; some deal with early printing and typography in the Spanish empire, others with Latin American newspapers and literary magazines in the United States, manuscripts in Spanish archives, pseudonyms and anagrams in Spanish literature, Spanish language newspapers published in Louisiana, and many other related subjects.

The compilers of this book are professors of Spanish; David Foster teaches at Arizona State University, and Virginia Foster teaches at Phoenix College. Their manual will be used by generations of students, scholars, and librarians.

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*American Racism: Exploration of the Nature of Prejudice.* By Roger Daniels and Harry H. L. Kitano. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970. 155 pp. \$4.94 hard cover; \$1.95 paperback.)

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*Reviewed by* NATHAN HARE, *Editor of The Black Scholar.*

RACISM, as we know it now, was unknown to the world until the European

expansion which began only a few centuries ago. True, there were slaves almost from the beginning of time, but without special regard to race or color.

*American Racism* "defines" and "illustrates" how the phenomenon of white racism came about. It distinguishes such concepts as racism ("the belief that one or more races have innate superiority over other races") and ethnocentrism ("the belief that one's own group is the best or superior to all others").

"Focusing initially" on the "interesting" California model of racism, with its uniquely multi-ethnic complex, the authors, Roger Daniels (a Jewish social scientist and author of *The Politics of Prejudice*) and Harry H. L. Kitano (a second generation Japanese American historian and author of *Japanese Americans*) lay bare the "many-hued nature" of racial prejudice. Kitano was "relocated" with other West Coast Japanese during World War II, and both authors have participated in a "variety of civil rights and economic opportunity programs."

However, the authors' ethnic origins appear to prejudice their focus, which is highly concentrated on the experiences of their own respective groups to which they tend to give an exaggerated place on the scale of the relative victimization of groups with the spectrum of ethnic discrimination. While admitting that prejudice against blacks may involve a different "constellation of factors" than anti-semitism, for example, they concentrate nonetheless on what they call "extraordinary factors" such as apartheid and genocide, only vaguely mindful that the "ordinary solutions" of segregation and discrimination experienced by black Americans are extraordinary in degree and tenacity.

Aside from a fair amount of academic twaddle, such as their "two-category" analysis, the authors write smoothly and clearly. The reader finds among the historical data such tidbits as the following headlines from the *San Francisco Chronicle* of 1905: "CRIME AND POVERTY GO HAND IN HAND WITH ASIATIC LABOR," "BROWN MEN ARE MADE CITIZENS ILLEGALLY," "JAPANESE A MENACE TO AMERICAN WOMEN," "BROWN MEN AS AN EVIL IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS," "ADULT JAPANESE CROWD OUT CHILDREN," "BROWN PERIL ASSUMES NATIONAL PROPORTIONS," "BROWN ARTISANS STEAL BRAINS OF WHITES," and so on. The *Los Angeles Times*, as late as December, 1941, is not much better. A sample of headlines in that month: "TWO JAPANESE WITH MAPS AND ALIEN LITERATURE SEIZED," "VEGETABLES FOUND FREE OF POISON," "FOOD PLOT FEARS SPREAD," and "CHINESE ABLE TO SPOT JAP."

There also are some platitudinous data and observations in *American Racism* such as those showing that the costs of discrimination are high for society in general. But the authors do manage to dispel old fallacies and outworn theories on racism, setting fire particularly to the pathological approach (notable in *The Authoritarian Personality*) where racism is linked to personality disturbances. A "normal" person (one adjusted to a society self-defined as racist by the National Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders in the Spring of 1968) may be more discriminatory, the authors observe, than persons not so well adjusted. Besides, racist attitudes may not jibe exactly with discriminatory behavior. Social scientists now know that there are racist-discriminators, non-racist discriminators, racist non-discriminators, and non-racist non-discriminators.

Perhaps the most interesting and useful portion of *American Racism* is its analysis of "triggering" circumstances behind the Nazi concentration camps and the American evacuation and relocation of Japanese during World War II. The authors seek to answer the final question: "Can it happen again?" They hope that it will not.

All racists (most white Americans) should read this book and hang their heads.

*La Causa: The California Grape Strike.* By George D. Horwitz. Photographs by Paul Fusco. (New York: Macmillan Company, 1970. 160 pp., illus. Introduction by Cesar Chavez. \$3.95 paper, \$7.95 hard-bound.)

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*Reviewed by T. H. WATKINS, former editor and currently associate editor of The American West magazine, and the author of two recently-published books—Gold and Silver in the West: The Illustrated History of an American Dream and The Water Hustlers.*

*La Causa* is a compelling and often moving testament to the strength and durability of a dream which some segments of California's population consider an outrageous nightmare: those *Chicanos*, those anonymous *greasers* who have quietly worked the gargantuan fields of California's agri-industry for two generations have become visible. Not only visible, but vocal. Not only vocal, but demanding. Standing up from their short-handled hoes (graciously supplied by the industry on the theory that Mexicans do their best work in a stooped position, since, as ex-Senator George Murphy once explained it, "They're built closer to the ground"), they have organized a union and are demanding a decent slice of the American pie. Astonishing! It's enough to make the ghost of Philip Bancroft spin like a dervish. What is worse, they're winning—they haven't won, but they're winning.

If anyone seeks to know *why* they're winning, they could do worse than start with a reading of *La Causa*. The text by George D. Horwitz is brief, and is in no sense a history of the farm worker movement; it is, rather, an evocation of the movement's spiritual core, an essay on the kind of people who are the source of its strength and durability. They are people he knows, people he has lived with, people he cares about: George, a sixty-six year-old Filipino; Marcario, a Mexican-Apache born in Indio in 1933; Amalia, an activist college student; and Pancho, who styles himself a professional troublemaker. With these four life-styles as his framework, Horwitz blends a collection of interviews, observations, impressions, and his own attitudes toward it all into a mosaic of personal journalism that is supremely effective. Cesar Chavez, the heart of the movement, is not ignored (in fact, unannotated photographs of him appear like icons throughout the basic text), but it is the lower echelons of the movement that Horwitz examines, for it is here that the whole thing is made to *work*.

The photographic essays by Paul Fusco complement the impressionistic thrust of the text in an uncommonly successful balance. If the pictures bear a sometimes startling resemblance to the migrant-worker photographs Dorothea Lange took thirty-five years ago, it should serve to remind us how little we have progressed in the midst of all the Progress around us.

Objectivity? Forget it. Neither Horwitz nor Fusco consider the point relevant. In the face of the conventional wisdom that maintains there are two sides to every question, they probably would be inclined to answer as an editor friend of mine once answered: "Right. There *are* two sides: a right side and a wrong side." *La Causa* documents the right side. Buy it.



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# Anza Conquers the Desert

THE ANZA EXPEDITIONS FROM MEXICO TO CALIFORNIA  
AND THE FOUNDING OF SAN FRANCISCO: 1774 TO 1776

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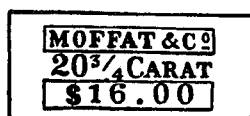
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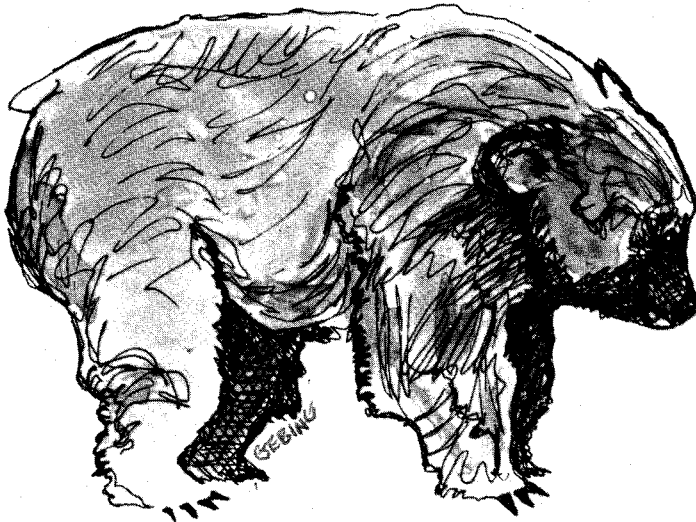
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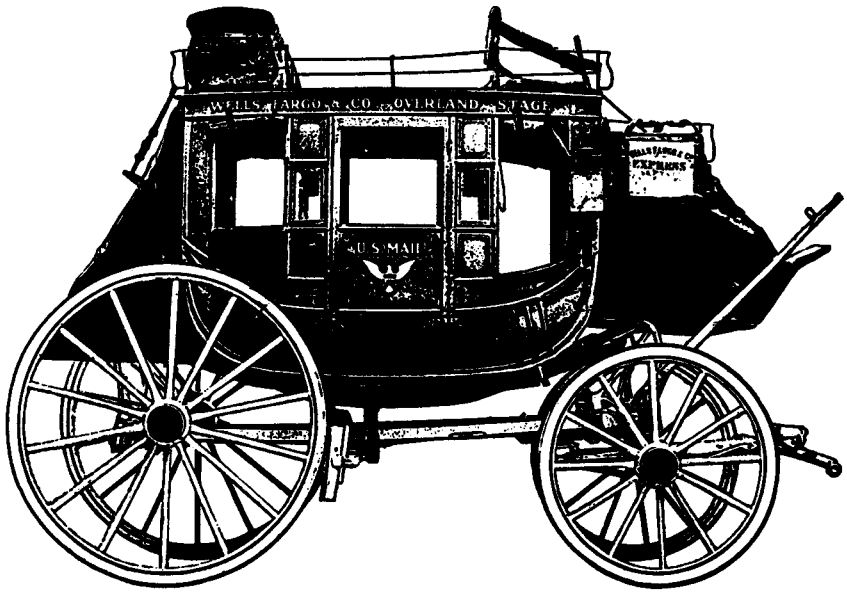
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